

The Jungian Myth and Advaita Vedanta

Dr Carol Whitfield

As the intellectual dialogue between the East and the West increases, there is a growing attempt among Western scholars to synthesize Eastern and Western psychologies, spiritual techniques, and philosophies.¹ This work places itself amidst this scholarship in its attempt to construct a synthesis of the Jungian myth and Advaita Vedanta.

Preliminary assumptions

This study does not attempt to define or discuss basic Jungian categories and concepts, since there are many good works in which this task is accomplished. I would recommend the following four texts for this purpose. First, Jung's own autobiography, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, will give the reader a personal

¹ For example, Raimundo Pannikar, Ninian Smart, and Wilfred Cantwell Smith are three theologians who have done extensive work in pluralistic theology. Harold Coward, Steven Katz, and Eric Sharpe, all scholars in religious studies, are, also, exploring this field. In psychology, Ken Wilber, Jack Engler, and Daniel Brown are attempting to integrate Eastern spirituality into Western psychology. These are only a few examples of scholars who are trying to form a bridge to the East.

relationship with Jung and also a context in which to place the development of his ideas. At the end of *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* is a glossary of Jungian terminology. If the reader is not familiar with Jungian terms such as anima, animus, collective unconscious, ego, individuation, Self, and shadow, to name a few, this glossary is most useful. The second suggested text is *C.G. Jung*, by Elie Humbert. There are many other good introductory texts, but this text I find myself frequently rereading, which speaks to its unique value and usefulness. The third text is Jung's *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*, Volume 7 of the *Collected Works*. It is an excellent introductory text to Jung's work because, in this text, Jung does not assume that the reader is already familiar with his ideas. The fourth text is *Ego and Archetype* by Edward Edinger. I have relied heavily on the work of Edward Edinger for understanding Jung's religious orientation. *Ego and Archetype* is an excellent introduction to this aspect of Jung's work. These four texts will form an adequate basis for the reader to understand the Jungian myth with which this work is primarily concerned.

Whereas most scholars are familiar with basic Jungian concepts, very few scholars have even the most cursory exposure to Advaita Vedanta as it is traditionally taught in India. Unlike for the work of Jung, very few reliable expositions on Advaita Vedanta are available in the English language. English translations of Vedantic texts are available, but are very difficult to understand because the Sanskrit language uses a wealth of terms for which we have no comparable concepts. Also, Vedantic texts are extremely terse, for they are meant to be elaborated upon by a teacher who has been instructed in the teaching methodology. For this reason, several chapters will be devoted to explaining the fundamental concepts of Advaita Vedanta, whereas basic knowledge of Jungian concepts will be assumed.

The Jungian Myth

In *Answer to Job*, written in 1952, Jung gives a psychological interpretation of the Christian myth, tracing the transformation of the Western God-image, beginning with Yahweh at the time of Job, through to the Dogma of the Assumption of Mary, which was proclaimed by Pope Pius XII in November of 1950. In this work, Jung interprets the Christian myth as a collective expression of the individuation process as it unfolds in an individual psyche. Jung was impelled to understand the Christian myth in such a way that he could re-invoke in himself a living relationship with God. Jung believed that the Christian myth accurately portrays one's direct and experiential relationship with the God-image, when it is interpreted in terms of realities and relationships within the psyche. For many people, including Jung, such a revelation has succeeded in bringing the life breath back into the Christian myth by transforming its meaning into an experiential inner reality.

Jung's psychology is an empirically based, descriptive psychology of the human psyche. His discoveries and conclusions result from personal explorations of his own psyche and that of his analysands. These explorations, to the extent that they are empirically verifiable, cannot be negated by science as the uninformed beliefs of a less enlightened era. At the same time, Jung's discoveries tread upon religious ground. He discovered that the ego² is related to a supraordinate organizing principle of the psyche,

² Jung defines the ego as "the complex factor to which all conscious contents are related. It forms as it were, the centre of the field of consciousness; and, in so far as this comprises the empirical personality, the ego is subject to all personal acts of consciousness. The relation of a psychic content to the ego forms the criterion of its consciousness, for no content can be conscious unless it is represented to a subject." C.G. Jung, *Aion*, CW 10, [CW refers throughout to *The Collected Works of C.G. Jung* (Bollingen Series XX)], Trans. R.F. C. Hull, Ed. H. Read, M. Fordham, G. Adler, Wm. McGuire (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953-1979) par. 1.

which he called the Self. This led Jung into an essentially religious psychology because his primary concern became the ego's relationship to the Self and he could not differentiate the Self from the God-image in the psyche. Jung says:

The symbols of divinity coincide with those of the self: what, on the one side, appears as a psychological experience signifying psychic wholeness, expresses on the other side the idea of God. This is not to assert a metaphysical identity of the two, but merely the empirical identity of the images representing them, which all originate in the human psyche...What the metaphysical conditions are for the similarity of the images is, like everything transcendental, beyond human knowledge.³

Jung believed that one's individual destiny is guided by the Self which can come into consciousness only through the ego. It is the task of the ego to come to terms with the will of the Self, or, to use religious language, with the will of God. The coming into consciousness of the Self is what Jung calls the process of individuation.

³ C.G. Jung, *Civilization in Transition*, CW 10, par. 644.

Jung asserts that both God and Self are realities which lie beyond our empirical means of knowledge and can only be known through their manifestations in consciousness. Jung says:

I have suggested calling the total personality which, though present, cannot be fully known, the self. The ego is, by definition, subordinate to the self and is related to it like a part to the whole. Inside the field of consciousness it has, as we say, free will. By this I do not mean anything philosophical, only the well-known psychological fact of "free choice," or rather the subjective feeling of freedom. But, just as our free will clashes with necessity in the outside world, so also it finds its limits outside the field of consciousness in the subjective inner world, where it comes into conflict with the facts of the self. And just as circumstances or outside events "happen" to us and limit our freedom, so the self acts upon the ego like an objective occurrence which free will can do very little to alter. It is, indeed, well known that the ego not only can do nothing against the self, but is sometimes actually assimilated by unconscious components of the personality that are in the process of development and is greatly altered by them.⁴

The ego is born of the Self, exists in the Self, and, Jung suspects, resolves into the Self upon death. This being the case, the entire life of the ego can be seen in terms of its relationship to the Self. Edward Edinger, in his book, *Ego and Archetype*, says of this relationship that:

since there are two autonomous centers of psychic being, the relation between the two centers becomes vitally important. The ego's relation to the Self is a highly problematic one and corresponds very closely to man's relation to his Creator as depicted in religious myth. Indeed the myth can be seen as a symbolic expression of the ego-Self relationship. Many of the vicissitudes of psychological development can be understood in terms of the changing relation between ego and Self at various

stages of psychic growth.⁵

⁴ C.G. Jung, *Aion*, CW 9ii, par. 9.

⁵ Edward Edinger, *Ego and Archetype* (New York: Penguin Books, 1972), 4.

The ego and the Self are the primary components of the psyche and their relationship to each other, therefore, defines the quality of one's life. If the ego is dissociated from the Self, it will experience isolation and meaninglessness. If it is in relation with the Self in an unhealthy way, then it will suffer the consequences of that ill-health. The ego's relation to the Self makes up the myth of meaning in which a person lives.

The psyche has an archetypal need for a god and cannot brook its absence. If necessary, the psyche will create gods out of secular idols for the ego must be contained in and related to something greater than itself in order for it to be healthy.

Since the scientific revolution, the West has been in a period of great transition, wherein its Christian God-image has been continuously undermined by the advances of science, resulting finally in the absence of a collective containing myth. We are, as Edward Edinger has stated, like fish who have been thrown onto the sand, looking back at what once contained us, uncertain now whether we can survive in this new atmosphere.⁶ The majority of us have lost contact with our God-image and are desperately thrashing

⁶ Edward Edinger used this analogy in a taped lecture series on C.G. Jung's *Aion* for the C.G. Jung Institute of Los Angeles in 1982. around on the sand waiting for God to reveal Himself to us again.

Some scholars, such as Edward Edinger, see Jung as an epochal man through whom the new God-image and our relationship to it has been revealed. Edinger notes that:

just as Jung's discovery of his own mythlessness paralleled the mythless condition of modern society, so Jung's discovery of his own individual myth will prove to be the first emergence of our new collective myth. In fact, it is my conviction that as we gain historical perspective it will become evident that Jung is an epochal man. I mean by this a man whose life inaugurates a new age in cultural history.⁷

Only time will tell whether Jung has really been the one chosen to pour the myth of the previous age into a new mold which can adequately contain the collective psyche of the new age. Certainly, we cannot deny the momentous impact of Jung's discoveries if we accept that the religious symbols of the Christian

⁷ Edward Edinger, *The Creation of Consciousness: Jung's Myth for Modern Man* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1984), p. 12.

myth are archetypal images generated from the deepest level of the collective unconscious and portray, in the mythological language of the psyche, the ego's relation to the Self which is indistinguishable from God. This insight re-established for Jung and many others a living relationship with the Christian God-image by recasting the "the divine drama"⁸ of the Western God-image into a psychological reality. His work mediates and resolves the disparities between Christian dogmas and science, breathing life back into a myth which has been systematically stripped of its reality since the Enlightenment.

As mentioned earlier, the divine drama as chronicled in *Answer to Job*, ends with the dogma of the Assumption of Mary in 1950. According to Jung, the Assumption marked the inclusion of the feminine into the Western God-image, transforming the masculine trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, into a quaternity. Jung asserts that the inclusion of the feminine principle completes the God-image, for it now contains within it the polar opposites of which male and female are representative. The transformation of the God-image into a quaternity brings us very close to the God-image of the

Hindu

⁸ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, par. 560.

Upaniñads. This transformation of the God-image into a quaternity together with a psychological approach to the ego's relationship to God forms a bridge to the Upaniñadic wisdom of Advaita Vedanta. One important premise of this work is that Advaita Vedanta contains the knowledge which is the task of our new myth to realize.

The Vision of Advaita Vedanta

Advaita Vedanta uses the Hindu Upaniñads, Bhagavadgétä, and Brahmasütras as its main canon. Its chief commentator is Çaikaräcärya whose commentaries on these major texts are the authority for Advaita Vedäntins. The Upaniñads are also called Vedanta, along with the teaching tradition which expounds them. Etymologically, the word "Vedanta," means the last portion of the Vedas, the word 'anta' meaning 'last' or 'end.' The Upaniñads are found at the end of the Vedas and are, therefore, called Vedanta.⁹

⁹ There are four Vedas, the Åk, Yajur, Säma, and Atharva, and each Veda can be divided into two distinct sections, the karmakäëða (the section on rituals) and the jñanakäëða (the section on knowledge). Both sections are said to contain revealed knowledge, but have different subject matter. The first section concerns itself primarily with rituals for achieving various ends and dharma, while the second deals with the nature and reality of the individual, creation, and God. We are concerned here only with Upaniñads, that is, the second section, the jñanakäëða, as handed down through the teaching tradition of Advaita Vedanta.

The Upaniñads teach that the ultimate nature of reality is advaita, meaning 'non-dual.' Advaita Vedanta is the name of the tradition which teaches the non-dual nature of reality as revealed in the Upaniñads. When traditionally taught, an Upaniñad is used as a vehicle for revealing the ultimate nature of reality. It is viewed as a revealed means of knowledge (pramäëa) for knowing the non-dual substrate identity of the individual, the universe, and God, and it asserts that this knowledge releases or liberates a seeker from his or her sense of bondage and limitation. In Jungian terms, Advaita Vedanta reveals the non-dual substrate identity of the ego and the God-image.

Advaita Vedanta, as it is traditionally taught in the four maöhas established by Saikaräcärya¹⁰ in India, has very limited exposure in this country. It has never been one of the popular new age movements nor do we find attention given to it in our universities. I

¹⁰ A maöha is a center of learning. According to the tradition, Çaikara established four maöhas in order to maintain the Vedic dharma and protect it from the influences of Buddhism. It is the responsibility of the maöhas to maintain the teaching methodology of Advaita Vedanta. The date of Çaikara and thus the establishment of the Çaikara maöhas are still up for debate. Please see R. Balasubramanian, *Advaita Vedanta* (Madras: University of Madras, 1976), 5. "There is no unanimity among scholars with regard to the date of Çaikara. Some scholars assign Çaikara to 5th century B.C. Some others fix the date of Çaikara as 8th century A.D." The tradition maintains that the date is around 2nd century A.D.

actually know of only one scholar in academia in the United States, Dr. Anantanand Rambachan of St. Olaf College, who has been trained to teach Vedanta traditionally using the original Sanskrit texts and commentaries, and following a very specific teaching methodology.¹¹ And, as far as my research has shown, there is only one private institute of Sanskrit and Vedantic studies in the United States, Årña Vidyä Gurukulam, which follows the teaching tradition (sampradäya) of Çaikara.

There are several reasons why a traditional understanding of Advaita Vedanta and its teaching methodology remains virtually unknown in the West. First, and perhaps foremost, only the smallest handful of traditional teachers of Vedanta know English. Most teach in Sanskrit and in their native tongue—Hindi, Telegu, Tamil, etc. Many of them are renunciates (sannyäsin), and abiding by ancient

¹¹ There are a small number of Western scholars who are interested in Advaita Vedanta, but they consistently view Vedanta as one of the six darçanas, or philosophical schools of Indian thought. Traditionally, Vedanta is viewed as a means of knowledge (pramäëa) which follows a very particular teaching methodology meant to give immediate knowledge of the Self. The vision of Vedanta cannot be gained without undergoing its teaching methodology, the reasons for which will become clear in the course of this study. Scholars,

therefore, who have not been properly exposed to Vedanta will not understand its essential nature and will treat it as one of the many philosophical systems.

scriptural prohibitions, never leave their native soil. Though most of the major Vedantic texts have been translated into English, along with many of the more well-known commentaries which explain them, the subject does not lend itself to easy understanding without the aid of a teacher who has been taught in the traditional manner (çrotriya) and who has personally realized the import of the teaching (brahmaniñöha).

The second reason why Advaita Vedanta remains unknown in the West is that Western scholarship, in general, has not focused on Eastern studies and has even avoided it to some extent, at least in part, because of time constraints. Western culture has its own elaborate myth and does not have time to study the myth of another culture. The East, as opposed to the Greeks or even the Muslims, has not been directly involved in the development of the Christian heritage. For this reason, to augment the Western syllabus by including the study of Eastern traditions seems to impose an unmanageable burden. Perhaps we have unconsciously decided to let the East live out its myth on one side of the planet while we live out ours on the other—an attitude explicitly expressed in Rudyard Kipling's famous line: "...East is east, and west is west, and never the twain shall meet..."¹² Even the apostle Paul bypassed the East because "they [Paul and Timothy] had been told by the Holy Spirit not to preach the word in Asia."¹³

Third, Eastern traditions are articulated in languages very difficult for the Westerner to master—Sanskrit, Chinese, Japanese, etc. Several years of language study are necessary even to approach the primary sources, and then, the language is so difficult and the concepts and culture so foreign to the West, that understanding the texts still requires the aid of an Eastern scholar. To achieve a level of fluency in an Eastern language comparable to the fluency a Western scholar is expected to attain in a classical or modern occidental language such as German, French, Latin, or Greek is next to impossible.

But language is not the only limiting factor. A Western scholar, even if he or she were to study an Eastern tradition for his or her lifetime, would never approach the Eastern scholar's depth and breadth of knowledge. A Vedic pundit in India begins his scriptural studies in childhood and grows up basking

¹² Rudolf Otto, *Mysticism East and West* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1932), xv.

¹³ Acts 16:6 NJB

in and absorbing the riches of his culture. He will have committed at least one of the four Vedas to memory by his teenage years. If he finds his major interest to be Vedanta, he will easily learn the Vedantic literature along with its commentaries by heart, as memorization has been highly stressed in his schooling and comes to him remarkably easily; he will have studied Indian logic (nyäya) and the six philosophical systems (darçanas). He will know the Rāmāyaëam and Mahābhāratam, the purāëas, and an endless array of cultural and traditional customs, stories, rituals, dramas, songs, dance, etc. with which he has been brought up since childhood, all of which are continually referred to in the scriptural literature and, therefore, necessary prerequisites for understanding it. The Western scholar, on the other hand, begins his or her study in adult life with a blank slate and so, in comparison with the Hindu scholar, is in a very humble position when it comes to understanding and working with Hindu scriptural texts.

These are a few of many reasons why Western scholarship has essentially ignored India and its wisdom. But by so doing, we have cut ourselves off from a teaching tradition which has tremendous spiritual insights to offer. During the past 30 years, the West has witnessed an increasing desire for

Eastern wisdom, especially among young people. This desire, I believe, has been constellated in our psyches by the force of the transforming God-image within our own myth. Jung was aware of this movement toward the East and wrote several papers which detailed the dangers he foresaw in a Westerner's attempt to follow an Eastern spiritual path.

The Need for a Synthesis

Jung feared that the Western psyche was not psychologically prepared to follow Eastern spiritual disciplines and would actually be harmed by such a pursuit. Harmed, in the sense that Eastern disciplines, such as yoga and meditation, are actually inimical to the Western psyche's process of maturation. Jung felt that Westerners would find themselves only imitating the East rather than discovering its wisdom within the depths of their own souls and that Eastern disciplines would impede this process. Though I agree with Jung and have personally experienced the dangers that he warns against, still, I cannot deny, nor can he, the treasure trove of truth to be found in the East. Jung said, "The philosophy of the East, although so vastly different from ours, could be an inestimable treasure for us too; but, in order to possess it, we must first earn it."¹⁴ I believe that the Upaniṣads contain universal truths and, therefore, are not subject to culture and time. The style of teaching those truths and the means and examples used for conveying them may necessarily differ from culture to culture. The truth, however, cannot change its nature, nor is that anyone's goal. Rather, the truth must be imparted in a way which is consonant with the culture of the person who is trying to realize it.

Advaita Vedanta addresses realities that are independent of race and culture and that are applicable to humanity in general. The teaching is, however, ensconced in a cultural milieu, and a Western student, who has not grown up within the Hindu culture, can easily confuse cultural and universal truths, superimposing the one upon the other. If this happens, the student will have trouble incorporating the Vedantic vision into his or her life without leaving behind the religious, cultural, and psychological norms of his or her own time and setting. The student may find himself or herself trying to become

¹⁴ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, par. 961.

a Hindu in order to gain the wisdom of the East. This was one of Jung's greatest fears for the Western seeker. He said:

Western imitation is a tragic misunderstanding of the psychology of the East, every bit as sterile as the modern escapades to New Mexico, the blissful South Sea islands, and central Africa, where "the primitive life" is played at in deadly earnest while Western man secretly evades his menacing duties, his *Hic Rhodus hic salta*. It is not for us to imitate what is foreign to our organism or to play the missionary; our task is to build up our Western civilization, which sickens with a thousand ills. This has to be done on the spot, and by the European just as he is, with all his Western ordinariness, his marriage problems, his neuroses, his social and political delusions, and his whole philosophical disorientation.¹⁵

A universal truth held by the East must be available to the West, if it is, indeed, universal.

¹⁵ C.G. Jung, *Alchemical Studies*, CW 13, par. 5.

However, that truth must be properly acculturated if it is not to remain dissociated from our Western God-image, which is deeply rooted in Christianity. Otherwise, the Eastern truth will be unconsciously superimposed upon the Christian God-image, and as Jung fears, the seeker will become an imitator of the East, dressed in a costume foreign and uncomfortable to his or her cultural, social, and psychological heritage. Jung said, "it is sad indeed when the European departs from his own nature and imitates the East or 'affects' it in any way,"¹⁶ Our Godimage must evolve through our consciousness of it, not through our dissociation from it. This is Jung's position and this work is in

full agreement with it. However, such a position does not preclude us from serious study of the Upaniñads. Jung, himself, studied them quite extensively. Rather, it warns us of certain pitfalls to which we could unconsciously fall prey. Keeping Jung's position in mind, exposure to the Upaniñads, when they are utilized in a traditional manner as a means of knowledge, could prove to be invaluable to us.

Traditionally, Advaita Vedanta is viewed as a means of knowledge for the direct revelation of the

¹⁶ Ibid., par. 8.

Self.¹⁷ It is neither a religion nor a philosophy and the knowledge which it imparts is not based on belief or logic. Vedanta uses a teaching methodology which directs the mind of the student toward realities which are logically and experientially verifiable once seen. However, the student is not able to arrive at these truths through logic or sensory-based experience because the Self is not available as an object of perception.

All knowledge requires the utilization of a means of knowledge in order to gain an initial perception whose truth can then be verified or negated. But, the human being does not possess at his or her easy disposal, a means of knowledge for knowing the Self. Our sensory equipment is meant only to perceive objects other than the subject. They, themselves, do

¹⁷ The Vedantic Self cannot be equated to the Jungian Self, though Jung is indebted to Vedanta for his use of the term. The Vedantic Self is limitless consciousness/existence/ fullness which is the substrate reality of the creation. For Jung, "...the self is a quantity that is supraordinate to the conscious ego. It embraces not only the conscious but also the unconscious psyche, and is therefore, so to speak, a personality which we also are...There is little hope of our ever being able to reach even approximate consciousness of the self, since however much we may make conscious there will always exist an indeterminate and indeterminable amount of unconscious material which belongs to the totality of the self." See C.G. Jung, *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*, CW 7, par. 274. and C.G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, 398

not have the capacity or the independent sentiency to turn around and look at the conscious being who makes use of them. Therefore, though the Self is pure consciousness and is the content of the knowing "I," it remains shrouded in ignorance, for the human being does not have a sense organ with which to perceive it. Advaita Vedanta, the tradition states, is a revealed means of knowledge given to humanity for this purpose. It is the "sense organ" for knowing the Self.

As any other means of knowledge, Vedanta must produce a thought-modification of its object in the mind. If I use my eyes to see a rose, the eyes enable the mind to reflect the rose. If I use Vedanta in a similar way, as a means of knowledge, Vedanta will enable the mind to reflect the Self. However, in this instance, the thought-form of the Self is true to the conscious subject, the knower, which eliminates the knower/ known differentiation, as consciousness is now illumining a thought-form of consciousness. This would be analogous to consciousness reflecting itself in a mirror.

In order for this type of knowledge to take place, a certain disposition of mind is required. The initial verses of an Upaniñad will often list the qualifications a seeker must have in order to gain Self-knowledge. Without these qualifications, which are traditionally considered to be prerequisites even to study an Upaniñad, the student will either be incapable of using the Upaniñad as a means of knowledge, or though able to gain knowledge of the Self at the time of teaching, will be incapable of incorporating that knowledge into day to day life.

The tradition acknowledges that most students will not enjoy these qualifications in full when beginning the study. However, the tradition claims that exposure to the teaching methodology of Vedanta by an enlightened and traditionally trained teacher should result in the attainment of the qualifications as well as the promised liberation from sorrow and limitation. Unfortunately, most modern day students have been disappointed in both regards. They have not been able to attain the necessary qualifications nor have they been able to honestly define themselves as free from sorrow

and limitation. This work hopes to establish that the reasons for this disappointment have been addressed by Jung and that an understanding and application of his psychological concepts is a necessary sādhanā (spiritual discipline) for a Western seeker.

The relevance and urgency of this synthesis has been a personal one. After having spent twenty years studying Advaita Vedānta under the able guidance of a traditional and wise teacher, and having practiced diligently for the same number of years the basic Hindu sādhanā for mental purification, I found that there still lingered in me an inexplicable feeling of discontent. I began to question those aspects of the Vedāntic vision which were culturally conditioned and had perhaps led me astray. I looked carefully at concepts and ideas concerning renunciation, surrender, humility, guru, ashram, saintliness, archetypes, instincts, celibacy, transference, meditation, and many more. And I suspected that I had perhaps prematurely and inappropriately related myself to many of these concepts resulting in an unhappy state of discontent. By chance, I came across the work of Carl Jung seven years ago. His work, especially, his small volume, *Psychology and the East*, not only confirmed much of my thinking and personal experience, it also inspired me to begin Jungian analysis as a part of my own sādhanā for gaining the emotional maturity necessary for a mature relationship with the Self I had discovered through Vedānta.

Jung believed that we have to discover the wisdom of the East on our own within the symbols of our own myth. This work is in sympathy with Jung's position. However, according to Jung, the Western God-image has now brought into itself the polar opposites, which brings us closer to the East. Perhaps, because of this, the West can learn from the East and incorporate its wisdom without imitating it.

In the modern era, the world has become a global community and new bridges of knowledge between the East and West are continually being discovered. Sharing and integrating our mutual riches should be helpful in the pursuit of both the personal and collective truths by which we live. My principle task is to bring the vision of Advaita Vedānta into the Jungian myth and to bring a Jungian psychological orientation and means for spiritual maturation into Advaita Vedānta. Hopefully, such a synthesis will remove the despair from Jung's myth and will make Advaita Vedānta emotionally accessible to the Western student.

A Chapter Outline

The study is divided into five chapters. The first two chapters discuss Jung's new myth. Chapter One focuses on the loss of our containing myth and the effects of such a loss on our psyche. Chapter Two discusses Jung's psychological recasting of the Christian myth into a new myth which Jung found personally meaningful to him. The final section of Chapter Two discusses the transformation of the Trinitarian God-image into a quaternity with the Assumption of Mary, bringing our Western Godimage much nearer to the God-image of the East.

Chapter Three presents the vision of Advaita Vedānta and compares some of its key concepts with those of Jung. The vision of Vedānta extends beyond the epistemological limits to which Jung was confined and is, therefore, able to shed light on the substrate nature of consciousness, which is the Vedāntic Self. This knowledge adds a benign dimension to Jung's conception of the Western God-image. The assimilation of Eastern wisdom into the Western Godimage as the task of the new aeon is discussed.

Chapter Four addresses the problems a Western spiritual seeker will most likely encounter in following an Eastern spiritual path and suggests a Westernoriented approach to sādhanā which incorporates many of Jung's ideas. The chapter ends with a discussion on the Jungian and Vedāntic concepts of good and evil.

And finally, Chapter Five presents the conclusions of the study.

CHAPTER 1

THE NEED FOR A NEW MYTH

A

s the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.¹⁸

The human soul searches for its completion and fulfillment, seeming always to cry for the womb of its origins, seeking to reunite with its creator and regain its original state of wholeness. It seems to yearn for God. According to Jung, such a quest is archetypal. The soul cannot but seek its wholeness, which in religious terms is expressed as “union with God,” in Vedantic terms as “liberation,” in mythological terms, as “finding the lost treasure,” and in Jungian terms, as “the process of individuation.”

Our great religious myths give expression and direction to this archetypal quest through their sacred scripture, ritual, prayer, meditation, and mystical teachings. They provide purpose and meaning for the yearnings and hopes of the soul. They hold the soul’s vision of life and enclose it in a meaningful existence. They account for its origins and destinations and its relationship to God. Though the religious myths of

¹⁸ Ps. 42:1

humanity are numerous, Eliade has noted certain common beliefs that all seem to share. He said:

Whatever the historical context in which he is placed, homo religiosus always believes that there is an absolute reality, the sacred, which transcends this world but manifests itself in this world, thereby sanctifying it and making it real. He further believes that life has a sacred origin and that human existence realizes all of its potentialities in proportion as it is religious—that is, participates in reality. The gods created man and the world, and culture heroes completed the Creation, and the history of all these divine and semidivine works is preserved in the myths. By reactualizing sacred history, by imitating the divine behavior, man puts and keeps himself close to the gods—that is, in the real and the significant.¹⁹

History gives ample testimony that without such a containing myth²⁰ a society cannot survive. Perhaps

¹⁹ Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane* (New York: Harvest/HBJ Book, 1959), 202.

²⁰ The term, “containing myth,” I borrowed from Edward Edinger. Please see Edinger, *The Creation of Consciousness: Jung’s Myth for Modern Man* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1984), 9-12.

the human soul cannot live without meaning and purpose, just as the physical body cannot survive without its nourishment. The relationship with something eternal and transcendent, something of a higher order than our perceived finite and limited existence, is an archetypal dyad which completes and fulfills the soul and without which the soul suffers the anguish of an abandoned child. Edinger says:

History and anthropology teach us that a human society cannot long survive unless its members are psychologically contained within a central living myth. Such a myth provides the individual with a reason for being. To the ultimate questions of human existence it provides answers which satisfy the most developed and discriminating members of the society. And if the creative, intellectual minority is in harmony with the prevailing myth, the other layers of society will follow its lead and may even be spared a direct encounter with the fateful question of the meaning of life.²¹

When the psyche’s needs are provided for by a living myth which adequately contains its archetypal

²¹ Ibid., 9.

projections, the soul can be at peace with itself. The world, like a good parent, mirrors it, is in

tune with it, and allows its complete expression. Jung says:

Whenever there exists some external form, be it an ideal or a ritual, by which all the yearnings and hopes of the soul are adequately expressed—as for instance in a living religion—then we may say that the psyche is outside and that there is no psychic problem, just as there is then no unconscious in our sense of the word.²²

In such a situation, the psyche lives outside and the unconscious “contains nothing but the silent, undisturbed sway of nature.”²³ The psyche does not beckon for introspective attention and thus one is free to attend to the functions or tasks at hand. However, if its natural functions are disturbed or thwarted, one’s primary attention is drawn away from external tasks toward that which is ailing. Like the physical body, the psyche requires an enabling world for its healthy expression. When the archetypes lose their appropriate external counterparts, they become trapped in the

²² C.G. Jung, *Civilization in Transition*, CW 10, par. 159.

²³ C.G. Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, CW9.1, par. 50.

unconscious, creating waves of unrest, or they continue to project themselves externally, but onto inappropriate objects. In either case, the soul finds itself isolated, stranded in a world which no longer mirrors its existence. Such an experience of utter disregard greatly wounds the soul, as it would any living entity. Edinger says:

It is the loss of our containing myth that is the root cause of our current individual and social distress, and nothing less than the discovery of a new central myth will solve the problem for the individual and for society.²⁴

The Loss of our Containing Myth
and the Death of God

God speaks to us from within the psyche through images and symbols, and through the affect of his sacred presence. As Jung says, “A metaphysical being does not as a rule speak through the telephone to you; it usually communicates with man through the medium of the soul, in other words, our unconscious, or rather through its transcendental ‘psychoid’ basis.”²⁵ His presence can only be worshipped externally if

²⁴ Edward Edinger, *The Creation of Consciousness*, 11.

²⁵ C.G. Jung, *The Symbolic Life*, CW 18, par. 1586.

these inner images, symbols and affects are projected onto external forms, as in a living religion, which then acts as a containing myth for an inner relationship. If these externalized symbols lose their connection with the inner experience which evoked them, they become lifeless, they lose their numinosity and one no longer believes in them. This is what has happened to most of us in the modern era. We have educated ourselves out of our “belief systems.” God has been left behind as a relic of the past. We no longer have collective or communal symbols which contain our relationship to the sacred. We no longer know “the Truth.” Every belief has been relativized by a world awake to conflicting faiths, philosophies, psychologies, and scientific theories. Thus the psyche’s archetypal search for “union with God,” for that which is eternal, has no myth to contain it. There is no belief or faith, no one “Truth,” which, victorious over its rivals, has gained a consensus. The world has, in a sense, been demythologized and our conception of reality limited to the world of scientific empiricism. Images arising in the psyche from the unconscious, or the non-physical world, are dismissed as fantasy, imagination, or wishful thinking. If one’s inner life loses its reality, how can the source of that inner life remain credible or an object of meaningful inquiry? The primary purpose of religion is to bring the individual into relationship with God. This can be meaningful only to someone

for whom God is a living reality. Edinger says that:

understood psychologically, the central aim of all religious practices is to keep the individual (ego) related to the deity (Self). All religions are repositories of transpersonal experience and archetypal images. The innate purpose of religious ceremonies of all kinds seems to be to provide the individual with the experience of being related meaningfully to these transpersonal categories...²⁶

If we no longer accept the reality of transpersonal categories, then religious practices lose their meaning, for they cannot evoke the presence of a God who doesn't exist. And if God does exist for us, then the particular beliefs and the religious practices that we use must evoke our personal relationship with God in a form that is numinous to us if the practice is to be meaningful. Jung said that:

²⁶ Edward Edinger, *Ego and Archetype* (New York: Penguin Books, 1972), 63-64.

once metaphysical ideas have lost their capacity to recall and evoke the original experience they have not only become useless but prove to be actual impediments on the road to wider development. One clings to possessions that have once meant wealth; and the more ineffective, incomprehensible, and lifeless they become the more obstinately people cling to them.²⁷

For God to be God, He must be alive and present in our lives as a constant companion or presence. If God is not a living presence to us then He is, more or less, dead, just an idea, a possibility, kept in the back of the mind. Our acknowledgement of Him probably follows Pascal's logic—if he does exist, we are better off believing in him than not.

In fact, to only “believe” in God in a Pascalian sense is to fall out of living relationship with Him. Implicit in such belief is the distance of unknowing: “I do not know God, I have never met Him, but still, I believe that He must be there.” Or, “Though I have no proof of that, still, I hope that He exists.” If this distance of unknowing becomes too great, too far removed

²⁷ C.G. Jung, *Aion*, CW 9ii, par. 65.

from an inner sense of communion with His Being, then the sense of relationship will wane and as that happens, God will become an insignificant factor in one's life for some, and for others, a source of great pain and longing. For a spiritually oriented person, simple “belief” bereft of communion is painful. Such a person longs for intimate knowledge and union with God and cannot brook unknowing.

When Edinger talks of a containing myth, he is not referring to something which people believe, rather, he is referring to the reality in which people live. The relationship with God, with the sacred and transcendent, is experientially real for those who live within a religious myth. If not, they are not living within that myth. Jung, in a discussion on the extraordinary numinosity of a living God-image said:

The tremendous effectiveness (mana) of these images is such that they not only give one the feeling of pointing to the *Ens realissimum*, but make one convinced that they actually express it and establish it as a fact.²⁸

It is only when the veracity of the containing myth starts to be questioned that the reality of the God-image

²⁸ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, par. 558.

and its relationship to a transcendent reality comes into question. The ending of the Middle Ages and the birth of the “Age of Reason,” marks (somewhat arbitrarily, as such processes take place gradually over long periods of time), the end of our containing myth in the West, for this is when empirical science began to powerfully negate the veracity of spiritual realities which had, unfortunately, over time, become concretized into physical realities. Jung, in his introduction to

Answer to Job, addressed this problem, saying:

In what follows, I shall speak of the venerable objects of religious belief. Whoever talks of such matters inevitably runs the risk of being torn to pieces by the two parties who are in mortal conflict about those very things. This conflict is due to the strange supposition that a thing is true only if it presents itself as a physical fact. Thus some people believe it to be physically true that Christ was born as the son of a virgin, while others deny this as a physical impossibility. Everyone can see that there is no logical solution to this conflict and that one would do better not to get involved in such sterile disputes. Both are right and both are wrong. Yet they could easily reach agreement if only they dropped the word “physical.” “Physical” is not the only criterion of truth: there are also psychic truths which can neither be explained nor proved nor contested in any physical way.²⁹

We have somehow over the course of time lost our relationship with the psyche, with the spiritual or non-physical dimension of experience available to all of us. Now, for an experience to warrant the classification of “true” or “real” it is requisite that it have a physical counterpart. Otherwise, the experience does not adequately lend itself to scientific investigation and thus is not verifiable within the scientific paradigm. Phenomena which lie outside the realm of science are separated from “reality” by such words as subjective, belief, fantasy, imagination, and myth.

Ours has become a secularized myth with empirical science as the reigning deity. Lawrence Jaffe said, “Science, though it is only a tool, has for the last two hundred years functioned as a god (a supreme value), exacting, as all gods do, worship in its service.”³⁰ But we cannot pray to science. Our soul, religious in nature, falls ill when the world takes away

²⁹ Ibid. par. 553.

³⁰ Lawrence W. Jaffe, *Liberating the Heart* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1990), 82.

her God, for there is no longer a physical counterpart to contain and mirror the very core of her being. Edinger says:

If now the outer church loses its capacity to carry the projection of the Self, we have the condition which Nietzsche announced for the modern world, “God is dead!” All the psychic energy and values that had been contained in the church now flow back to the individual, activating his psyche and causing serious problems.³¹

The powers of science and modernity have relegated concretist religious beliefs to the realm of the naive and simplistic. Religious symbols, no longer understood, have been tossed out by modern men and women, who can no longer accept what doesn’t make sense to them. This has resulted in Nietzsche’s “death of God,” for the vast majority. Even the concept of a living relationship with God or the Self is absent for most people, as they are no longer contained within a myth which includes God.

But our religious nature does not disappear in the absence of a containing myth. If we have lost faith in

³¹ Edward Edinger, *Ego and Archetype*, 67.

our religious myth, which, for most of us in the West has been the Christian myth, then, the religious archetypes of the psyche will seek expression through other religious beliefs or in non-religious forms. Jung says:

The goals of religion—deliverance from evil, reconciliation with God, rewards in the hereafter, and so on—turn into worldly promises about freedom from care for one’s daily bread, the just distribution of material goods, universal prosperity in the future, and short working hours. That the fulfillment of these promises is as far off as Paradise only furnishes yet another analogy and

underlines the fact that the masses have been converted from an extramundane goal to a purely worldly belief, which is extolled with exactly the same religious fervor and exclusiveness that the creeds display in the other direction.³²

The human being is impelled by the psyche's religious function to serve something which is greater than himself or herself. If not God, then it will necessarily be something else. The God-image,

³² C.G. Jung, *Civilization in Transition*, CW 10, par. 513.

purpose, and meaning will be projected onto the profane rather than onto the sacred, creating what Eliade calls the "tragic existence"³³ of the modern nonreligious person. Eliade describes him as follows:

Modern nonreligious man assumes a new existential situation; he regards himself solely as the subject and agent of history, and he refuses all appeal to transcendence. In other words, he accepts no model for humanity outside the human condition as it can be seen in the various historical situations. Man makes himself, and he only makes himself completely in proportion as he desacralizes himself and the world. The sacred is the prime obstacle to his freedom. He will become himself only when he is totally demysticized. He will not be truly free until he has killed the last god.³⁴

Such a person's purpose and meaning center on what is finite and limited, and thus what had seemed purposeful will become purposeless and what had been meaningful meaningless as he or she confronts ultimate non-existence on all counts. Thus, his or her

³³ Mercea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, 203.

³⁴ Ibid

"tragic existence." The death of God is the death of one's link to the transcendent and eternal aspect of one's own being and thus the modern non-religious person must look forward to only an unimaginable non-existence. Unimaginable in the sense that though one can imagine and experience an objectless existence through the momentary cessation of sense perceptions and thought-modifications, one can never negate the Self-experience of one's own existence. Thus the existence of one's own being will always inform any imagination of non-existence, thereby negating the possibility of such an experience. Ultimately, as we will see later, one's own experience of existence is itself holy and numinous and cannot be distinguished from God, once it has been differentiated from the temporally bound physical objects with which it has become identified.

The Archetypal Need for God

Whether properly differentiated or not, the soul does seek relationship with the source of its being which we call God. Myths and religions contain in symbolic form the archetypal patterns inherent in this relationship. An archetype is a blueprint or pattern which sets the natural course for the unfoldment of innate experiences which arise at certain times and under certain conditions, or which are intrinsic to, in this case, human behavior. Jung, in a conversation with Richard Evans, explained that:

an archetype always is a sort of abbreviated drama. It begins in such and such a way, extends to such and such a complication, and finds its solution in such and such a way. That is the usual form. For instance, take the instinct in birds of building their nests, there is the beginning, the middle, and the end. The nests are built just to suffice for a certain number of young. The end is already anticipated... There is no time, it is a timeless condition where beginning, middle, and end are just the same; they are all given in one.³⁵

Archetypal structures, which are related to the instincts, determine the human being's patterns of behavior that characterize him or her as part of the human community. Jung found the relationship of

the individual to his or her God, to the sacred and transcendent, to be one such archetypal structure. If we accept this, then, the person cannot but need God,

³⁵ Richard Evans, *Conversations with Carl Jung and Reactions from Ernest Jones* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1964), 36.

for the relationship with the sacred and transcendent is programmed into the psyche of every person. The soul's archetypal relationship to God can, however, express itself in a myriad of Godless forms, if the sacred and transcendent God has lost its numinosity. In this case, the psyche will attach itself to a "false god," in such a way as to fulfill the archetypal relationship. For example, one's ultimate concern and object of devotion can be secular—one's ruling deity being money, power, fame, relationship, the State, or perhaps science.³⁶

Most archetypes can be viewed as dyadic in that they govern subject-object relationships. Examples of such dyadic archetypes are found in interpersonal relationships, such as the relationship between mother and child, lover and beloved, or teacher and student; in goal-oriented relationships, such as one's quest for fame, power, and money; and also in spiritual

³⁶ The term "ultimate concern" is borrowed from Paul Tillich. He defines it as follows: "Ultimate concern is the abstract translation of the great commandment: 'The Lord, our God, the Lord is one; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' [Mark 12:29 (RSV)]...The ultimate concern is unconditional, independent of any conditions of character, desire, or circumstance. The unconditional concern is total: no part of ourselves or of our world is excluded from it; there is no 'place' to flee from it." Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology: Three Volumes in One* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951-63), 11-12.

relationships, such as the soul's relationship with God or the ego's relationship with the Self.

Archetypal themes run through all the myths of the world and many will run through our own lives as well. When a theme that shows up repeatedly in our myths seems to be absent in the story of our own life, we can suspect that, perhaps, some part of our nature is being denied expression or is being forced to express itself in a distorted form. It is a good starting point for introspection.

It is neither possible nor necessary for any one human being to live out all of the archetypal patterns available to humanity. However, some archetypes are so basic to our human condition that the archetype must necessarily express itself and will try to create situations which will allow it to live itself out in one form or another. The dyadic relationship between the soul and God is such an archetype. In order for this relationship to live itself out properly, both members, the soul and God, must be consciously accounted for by the ego. But, in this "modern" era both have been devalued and ridiculed, and finally replaced by science, our new god. And thus many of us, estranged from both God and our own soul, suffer from a deep unrest in our psyche (the reality of which is also unknown to most of us). The archetypal dyad of the soul and God is so fundamental to our humanity that it must fulfill itself and will struggle to do so, even if only in terribly corrupted forms, until it is granted a healthy existence.

The ego which has lost its relationship to God suffers terribly. It can no longer hear or feel God, the archetype of the Self, which governs it from its depths, and will thus experience isolation and despair, suffering feelings of banishment and rejection, anxiety, and uncertainty. Jolande Jacobi says:

Adherence to imprinted modes of behavior and experience is a safeguard, deviation from which must be paid for with anxiety and uncertainty. The animal will give up these "safeguards" only when constrained by outward force; man, through the relative freedom of his consciousness, has the possibility of departing from them voluntarily; thus he is exposed to the twofold danger of hybris and isolation. For in detaching himself from his original and archetypal order, he cuts himself off from his specific historical roots.³⁷

³⁷ Jolande Jacobi, *Complex, Archetype, Symbol in the Psychology of C.G. Jung* (New York: Princeton University Press, 1959), 42.

In the modern era, the projection of the God-image has been withdrawn from the external world and has yet to be replaced. We can no longer take our religious creeds literally, or concretely, and for the vast majority of us, Christian beliefs have no relationship to our inner experience. As Jung says:

The Churches stand for traditional and collective convictions which in the case of many of their adherents are no longer based on their own inner experience but on unreflecting belief, which is notoriously apt to disappear as soon as one begins thinking about it. The content of belief then comes into collision with knowledge, and it often turns out that the irrationality of the former is no match for the ratiocinations of the latter. Belief is no adequate substitute for inner experience, and where this is absent even a strong faith which came miraculously as a gift of grace may depart equally miraculously.³⁸

Once the projections of inner realities have been withdrawn, then their concretized symbols which have been worshipped in the physical world are dismissed

³⁸ C.G. Jung, *Civilization in Transition*, CW 10, par. 521.

as the belief of a prior era. For symbols to remain alive, they must be infused with the truth of one's inner experience. Without being related to an experiential reality the symbol becomes an empty lifeless shell. Worshipping such a shell will certainly not provide the ego with any sense of completion or "union with God." Rather, the person will be left in a state of longing, full of unfulfilled or inappropriately fulfilled needs. And if the person has projected the God-image on the secular, he or she will also be hurt. False gods, finite and limited as they are, are incapable of fulfilling their side of the relationship—they cannot complete the ego or make it whole. The ego also cannot consciously recognize "the devotee" nature of its relationship with the false god and will find itself extraordinarily vulnerable to crushing hurts and disappointments.

This is the situation in which we find ourselves today. Science and modernity have dethroned our religious symbols from physical reality, leaving our conscious rational mind unrelated to the deity. We need now to turn inward to the source of the projections which have for so long been externalized. We need to come upon a new myth which can allow our relationship with the transcendent back into consciousness. Otherwise, the soul and God will be forced to remain underground in the unconscious, projecting out inappropriately upon the world for a sense of meaning, purpose, and eternity, which that relationship used to provide.

CHAPTER 2

THE JUNGIAN MYTH

The New Myth Must Reconcile Science and Religion

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ung realized that our new myth would have to reconcile science and religion. In other words, it must relate us to the sacred and transcendent without contradicting our scientific knowledge. We cannot deny science for the sake of religious belief. But, since Kant, we also presume that empirically based knowledge has neither the capacity to dismiss nor establish God, for He is beyond the range of Kantian epistemological limits. Whether He exists as a metaphysical reality is a theological question, not to be answered by science. However, science can affirm, as Jung so thoroughly establishes, that the imprint of God, that is, the God-image, is found in the psyche in many forms. As Jung explained, "The religious point of view understands the imprint as the working of an imprinter; the scientific point of view understands it as the symbol of an unknown and incomprehensible content."³⁹ The existence of the God-image in the

³⁹ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Alchemy*, CW 12, par. 20.

psyche neither proves nor defines, scientifically, a transcendent order of reality, but it does imply

such a possibility, which is beyond the realm of science to either confirm or deny.

Synchronistic experiences also intimate a different order of reality above and beyond perceptual reality. Jung, in his work on synchronicity, felt that there was evidence for the existence of a non-temporal, non-spatial level of reality which he hypothesized would be responsible for acausal connections. He said:

Synchronistic phenomena prove the simultaneous occurrence of meaningful equivalences in heterogeneous, causally unrelated processes; in other words, they prove that a content perceived by an observer can, at the same time, be represented by an outside event, without any causal connection. From this it follows either that the psyche cannot be localized in space, or that space is relative to the psyche. The same applies to the temporal determination of the psyche and the psychic relativity of time. I do not need

⁴⁰C.G. Jung, *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*, CW 8, par. 531.

to emphasize that the verification of these findings must have far-reaching consequences.⁴⁰

Science, until recently, has focused its gaze only on physical reality. This was due, at least in part, to the denigration of our subjective life over the last few centuries, as rational knowledge broke its bonds first with Scholasticism and then with philosophy. Lawrence Jaffe said:

Since the enthronement (at the end of the French Revolution) of Reason as Western civilization's ruling principle, respect for the inner, subjective life, the domain of religion, has been shrinking. We need only monitor our reaction to words such as "soul," "subjective," or "religion" to confirm their disrepute. As traditional religion declined in influence, depth psychology developed—as if humankind could not suffer the loss of a living connection to the inner world.⁴¹

But it seems that, due in part to the gradual flowering of Jung's seminal work, the inner world of the psyche is now beginning to be taken seriously. During his own time, great names in science, such as

⁴¹ Lawrence Jaffe, *Liberating the Heart*, 37.

Albert Einstein, Neils Bohr, J. Robert Oppenheimer, Werner Heisenberg, and Wolfgang Pauli were aware of Jung's work.⁴² Jung and Wolfgang Pauli spent many hours together discussing the relationship of physics and the objective psyche. Other scholars from many different disciplines, notably science, theology, and psychology, were also influenced by Jung's work. Such names as Sigmund Freud (Jung's mentor), Victor White, Paul Tillich, Mircea Eliade, and C. Kerenyi come immediately to mind.

New discoveries in knowledge are initially shared by and influence specialists in that field. But gradually over time, the new knowledge disseminates into the community. Many psychological concepts introduced by Jung are now common parlance. Laurens van der Post said:

"Words that he [Jung] introduced in new senses into modern English idiom have lost their elitism and are part today of our ordinary educated vocabulary. Terms like

⁴² Jung has made reference to his communications with Albert Einstein, Neils Bohr, J. Robert Oppenheimer, and Werner Heisenberg in his letters. Please see C.G. Jung, *Letters* (Bollingen Series XCV). 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), vol.2, 108, 54, 572, 329, 535). In addition, Charles Card wrote an article on the work of Jung and Wolfgang Pauli. Please see Charles Card, "The Archetypal View of C.G. Jung and Wolfgang Pauli," in *Psychological Perspectives*, vol. 24, Spring-Summer, 1991, 53-69.

extrovert, introvert, persona, archetype, anima, animus, and shadow, that we owe him, testify how wide and deep his impact has been."⁴³

Today, society at large is becoming more and more psychologically aware.⁴⁴ It is now common knowledge among the educated that the psyche affects one's experience of the outer world; that a person's perception of reality is greatly colored and distorted by his or her unconscious projections.

Jung stated this fact succinctly when he said that: “Projections change the world into the replica of one’s own face.”⁴⁵ Science, itself, has acknowledged for some time the influence of the subject on the perceived behavior of the object, i.e. waves vs. particles. Our present level of psychological knowledge no longer allows us, whatever be our discipline of investigation, to ignore the subjective half of experience in good conscience. Rather, it necessitates an equal inquiry into both the inner and outer worlds of experience. Aniela Jaffe quoted Wolfgang Pauli as saying that:

⁴³ Laurens van der Post, *Jung and the Story of our Time* (New York: Vintage Books, 1977), 3.

⁴⁴ The Chairman of my dissertation committee, Father Hilary Martin, suggested viewing the 1950’s movie, *Spellbound*, to experience the tremendous advancement in our psychological acuity over the last 40 years.

⁴⁵ C.G. Jung, *Aion*, CW 9ii, par. 17.

the investigation of scientific knowledge directed outwards should be supplemented by an investigation of this knowledge directed inwards. The former process is devoted to adjusting our knowledge to external objects; the latter should bring to light the archetypal images used in the creation of our scientific theories. Only by combining both these directions of research may complete understanding be obtained.⁴⁶

Jung’s domain of scientific investigation was the inner world of the psyche, the subjective life, that previously much ignored “other half” of all experience. It was Jung who discovered “the reality of the psyche,” often lauded as his most important contribution to humanity. Lawrence Jaffe in recounting a personal communication with C.A. Meier wrote:

⁴⁶ Wolfgang Pauli, “The Influence of Archetypal Ideas on the Scientific Theories of Kepler”. Translated by Priscilla Silz. In: *The Interpretation of Nature and the Psyche* (London and New York, 1955), 208f, quoted in Aniela Jaffe, *Jung’s Last*

⁴⁶ The Chairman of my dissertation committee, Father Hilary Martin, suggested viewing the 1950’s movie, *Spellbound*, to experience the tremendous advancement in our psychological acuity over the last 40 years.

⁴⁶ C.G. Jung, *Aion*, CW 9ii, par. 17.

⁴⁶ Wolfgang Pauli, “The Influence of Archetypal Ideas on the Scientific Theories of Kepler”. Translated by Priscilla Silz. In: *The Interpretation of Nature and the Psyche* (London and New York, Years (Texas: Spring Publications, 1972), 33.

Asked to name Jung’s most important contribution, C.A. Meier, his long-time friend and collaborator, replied, “The reality of the psyche.” That the psyche is as real as the material world, as valuable and as deserving of attention as the material world, serves nicely as a summary of Jung’s message.⁴⁷

Edward Edinger also recognized the profundity of Jung’s discovery and the far reaching implications it would have on human knowledge. In his preface to *Ego and Archetype*, Edinger said:

It is only beginning to dawn on the educated world, what a magnificent synthesis of human knowledge has been achieved by C.G. Jung. Starting as a psychiatrist and psychotherapist he discovered in his patients and in himself the reality of the psyche and the phenomenology of its manifestations at a depth never before observed systematically. As a result of this experience, he could then recognize the same phenomenology expressed in the culture-products of mankind—myth, religion, philosophy, art and literature. He has penetrated to the root

⁴⁷ Lawrence Jaffe, *Liberating the Heart*, 27.

source of all religion and culture and thus has discovered the basis for a new organic syncretism of human knowledge and experience. The new viewpoint thus achieved, is so comprehensive and all-embracing that, once grasped, it cannot fail to have revolutionary consequences for man’s view of himself and the world.

Pronouncements are not sufficient to convey new levels of consciousness. The realization of the “reality of the psyche” which makes this new world-view visible, can only be achieved by one

individual at a time working laboriously on his own personal development. This individual opus is called by Jung individuation—a process in which the ego becomes increasingly aware of its origin from and dependence upon the archetypal psyche. This book is about the process of individuation, its stages, its vicissitudes and its ultimate aim. I hope it will be a small contribution toward a goal that Jung's work has made eventually certain, namely, the reconciliation of science and religion.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ Edward Edinger, *Ego and Archetype*, xiii.

Religious experience is rooted in the archetypal psyche in that the psyche produces numinous symbols which can be viewed religiously as messages from a sacred and transcendent reality. The presence of religious symbols, images, and affect-laden experiences of something we deem the sacred and transcendent are undeniable psychological facts. However, without a knowledge of the reality of the psyche, these experiences which are not based in physical reality, will naturally be dismissed as mere fantasy or imagination; symbols which originate in the unconscious and denote transpersonal realities will be ignored. Such an orientation cuts the ego off from the religious half of experience, the half that is related to God, purpose, and meaning.

If, on the other hand, we accept the reality of the psyche, then we become accountable for these experiences. They become worthy of our “careful consideration.” Such an attitude opens the way for a new relationship with religion and with God. Jung defined religion, which he etymologically derives from the word *religio* as: “a careful observation and taking account of (from *relegere*) the numinous.”⁴⁹ Jung felt that it was through a psychological approach to

⁴⁹ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, par. 982.

religion that the ego could rediscover its relationship to God, as such a turning inward in order to take account of the numinous, brings religious concepts into one's immediate experience. Fordham said, “The contribution of analytical psychology to religion is this: it brings religious experience home to the individual in a way which nothing else can do; it brings it home as a psychological fact. This is surely a most important event.”⁵⁰

Once the conscious ego recognizes the reality of the psyche, it can regain its relationship to its symbolic life which is rooted in the Self, that numinous center which is the point of origin for religious symbols. Jung felt that a relationship with God or the Self is archetypal and, therefore, the rediscovery of this relationship is of utmost importance for our psychological wellbeing. In discussing his relationship with Freud, Jung commented:

We moderns are faced with the necessity of rediscovering the life of the spirit; we must experience it anew for ourselves. It is the only way in which to break the spell that binds us to the cycle of biological events.

⁵⁰ Michael Fordham, *The Objective Psyche* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958), 129.

My position on this question is the third point of difference between Freud's views and my own. Because of it I am accused of mysticism. I do not, however, hold myself responsible for the fact that man has, always and everywhere, spontaneously developed a religious function, and that the human psyche from time immemorial has been shot through with religious feelings and ideas. Whoever cannot see this aspect of the human psyche is blind, and whoever chooses to explain it away, or to “enlighten” it away, has no sense of reality.⁵¹

Jung realized the importance of the religious function for man and one of his life tasks was to unite the symbols of our religious heritage with the immediate truths of the psyche and thereby infuse the symbols with new life. He realized that external projections of God which concretize them into physical realities are no longer credible in the modern era and that His image must now be found

within. And, in fact, this is a positive development for humanity, if we make use of it. As Edinger says:

⁵¹ C.G. Jung, *Freud and Psychoanalysis*, CW 4, par. 781.

If when the individual is thrown back on himself through the loss of a projected religious value he is able to confront the ultimate questions of life that are posed for him, he may be able to use this opportunity for a decisive development in consciousness. If he is able to work consciously and responsibly with the activation of the unconscious he may discover the lost value, the god-image, within the psyche...The connection between ego and Self is now consciously realized. In this case loss of a religious projection has served a salutary purpose; it has been the stimulus which leads to the development of an individuated personality.⁵²

Jung felt that the New Myth would be based on Christianity

Jung felt that our new myth would necessarily be based on Christianity. The Western psyche has grown up within Biblical imagery and these archetypal symbols, indigenous to the Westerner, must now, he felt, be reinterpreted psychologically. This alone would infuse them with new life. He said:

⁵² Edward Edinger, *Ego and Archetype*, 67-68.

To gain an understanding of religious matters, probably all that is left us today is the psychological approach. That is why I take these thought-forms [the dogmas] that have become historically fixed, try to melt them down again and pour them into molds of immediate experience. It is certainly a difficult undertaking to discover connecting links between dogma and immediate experience of psychological archetypes, but a study of the natural symbols of the unconscious gives us the necessary raw material.⁵³

Jung, himself, from early childhood, had felt estranged from the Christian myth and had suffered greatly over the isolation which that estrangement caused. His father was a Protestant minister and thus Jung was continually exposed to the dogmas of Christianity from his early years. But he was never able to believe in the veracity of its truth claims and no one seemed able to help him. In his early teens, after much struggle, he admitted what to him was a great defeat—the disintegration of his religious outlook. He said:

⁵³ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, par. 148. See also Lawrence Jaffe, *Liberating the Heart*, 33.

My sense of union with the Church and with the human world, so far as I knew it, was shattered. I had, so it seemed to me, suffered the greatest defeat of my life. The religious outlook which I imagined constituted my sole meaningful relation with the universe had disintegrated; I could no longer participate in the general faith...For God's sake I now found myself cut off from the Church and from my father's and everybody else's faith. Insofar as they all represented the Christian religion, I was an outsider. This knowledge filled me with sadness which was to overshadow all the years until the time I entered the university.⁵⁴

In later years, after his break with Freud, Jung realized that not only was he outside the Christian myth, he was also without a myth of his own. He said:

I had explained the myths of peoples of the past; I had written a book about the hero, the myth in which man has always lived. But in what myth does man live nowadays? In the Christian myth, the answer might be, "Do you live in it?" I asked myself. To be honest, the

⁵⁴ C.G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (New York: Vintage Books, 1961), 56.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 171.

answer was no. For me, it is not what I live by." "Then do we no longer have any myth?" No, evidently we no longer have any myth." At this point the dialogue with myself became uncomfortable,

and I stopped thinking. I had reached a dead end.⁵⁵

Murray Stein, in his book, *Jung's Treatment of Christianity*, commented on this passage stating,

From many passages in his writings, it is evident that Jung was grappling mightily with what may be regarded as a central problem of modernity, namely, the loss of emotional and intellectual containment in a tradition of religious belief, symbol, and practice. From early on in his life, but especially after he had become deeply influenced by Freud and modern psychiatry, Jung felt himself to be outside of the Christian mythos. After breaking with Freud, he came to the uncomfortable realization that he was exposed to life without an orienting myth or religious tradition.⁵⁶

At this point, I feel it would be useful to recall to the reader the Christian myth to which Jung is referring,

⁵⁶Murray Stein, *Jung's Treatment of Christianity* (Illinois: Chiron Publications, 1985), 15.

as it is stated in the Nicene Creed. You can see for yourself how far removed, or not, you are from this myth as a concretized reality. And you can ask Jung's question for yourself, "Do you live in it?" Does it provide your life with meaning and purpose? The Nicene Creed reads as follows:

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, one in Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us men and for salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered, died and was buried. On the third day he rose again in fulfillment of the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.⁵⁷

In Christendom, during the Middle Ages, this myth was the prevailing truth. John Randall described the world view of the vast majority living in this age as follows:

The world was governed throughout by the omnipotent will and omniscient mind of God, whose sole interests were centered in man, his trial, his fall, his suffering and his glory. Worm of the dust as he was, man was yet the central object in the whole universe. About him revolved the heavens, for him were made land and sea and all that dwelt therein. He was the lord of creation, made in the very image of God himself. For his sake, despite his

⁵⁷ Mark Jordon, ed., *The Church's Confession of Faith: A Catholic Catechism for Adults*, trans. Stephen Wentworth Arndt. (San Francisco: Communio Books, 1985), 10.

unworthiness, Almighty God had taken on flesh in Bethlehem and bled upon the cross that he might be saved from his own folly and pride. And when his destiny was completed, the heavens would be rolled up as a scroll and he would dwell with the Lord forever. Only those who rejected God's freely offered grace and with hardened hearts refused repentance would be cut off from this eternal life. With such a conviction it was inevitable that seekers after the meaning of things should scrutinize every object and event of this the background of humanity's struggles to discover its bearing upon the fundamental purpose of things. Everything must possess significance, not in and for itself, but for man's pilgrimage. There must be a reason for everything, a purpose it served in the divine scheme. That one of God's creatures should exist apart from the course of Providence, that a single stone should fall unknown and unplanned by the maker of Heaven and Earth, was an intolerable

thought. If no other purpose could be discerned, it was enough that God's creatures

⁵⁸John Hermann Randall, Jr., *The Making of the Modern Mind* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1926, 1940), 34. existed to make manifest his greatness and lead the soul of man to glorify him.⁵⁸

This God-centered world view, most would agree, no longer holds our society. But at one time, these symbols and their dogmas had the power to contain the whole of our unconscious. They were an uncontested statement of absolute truth and thus the myth in which we lived. Barbara Hannah said:

Just as long as the unconscious is willing to flow in these channels, the religion in question provides everything that is required, and these times belong to the happiest in the history of the human race. There are still people today whose whole unconscious fits into the dogma of the church or religion in which they were brought up, and such people should be encouraged to remain within it. But as the state of the world teaches us daily, this is no longer the case for the vast majority.⁵⁹

But, even though the vast majority of us may no longer accept these symbols and dogmas as true to physical reality, they should have some meaning or purpose. They have existed in our psyche for almost

⁵⁹Barbara Hannah, *Encounters with the Soul: Active Imagination* (Cambridge: Sigo Press, 1981), 249.

2000 years. This fact alone is enough to make them worthy of investigation. As Jung said:

If I have ventured to submit old dogmas, now grown stale, to psychological scrutiny, I have certainly not done so in the priggish conceit that I knew better than others, but in the sincere conviction that a dogma which has been such a bone of contention for so many centuries cannot possibly be an empty fantasy.⁶⁰

Jung realized that his attempt to give new meaning to Christian dogma by psychologically interpreting it would appear blasphemous to many believing Christians, and would both alienate many of them from very valuable aspects of his work as well as subject him to scathing criticism. And, indeed, many theologians did accuse Jung of crossing the border from empirical psychology to theology and of treading ignorantly and naively in waters unknown to him. Victor White, a Dominican priest and theologian who had worked closely with Jung, made the comment that "Outside his own particular sphere

⁶⁰C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, pars. 294-295.

⁶¹Victor White, "The Frontiers of Theology and Psychology" (*The Guild of Pastoral Psychology: Guild Lecture No. 19*, 1942), 17, quoted in Murray Stein, *Jung's Treatment of Christianity*, 6.

of professional concern, his speculations seemed often distinctly amateurish."⁶¹ Other theologians also gave critical comment and analysis to Jung's "theology." Stein points to the work of Moreno, Hostie, and Heisig as examples of three theologians who had "criticized Jung, with great perceptiveness let it be said, for having made fundamental theological or philosophical mistakes."⁶²

Jung, of course, expected a critical backlash to his work as inevitable and his responses to it are found throughout his writings, especially in his letters. The dialogues between Jung and White are an especially poignant example of the reactions which Jung's work could cause. Jung had considered White to be perhaps the only theologian who had really understood him. "'Excuse the irreverential pun,' Jung wrote [to White], 'You are to me a white raven inasmuch as you are the only theologian I know who has really understood something of what the problem of psychology in our present world means. You have seen its enormous implications.'"⁶³ White had been a very enthusiastic student of Jung's work and felt that it would be of great

⁶²Ibid., 9.

⁶³C.G.Jung, *Letters* vol.1, 383, quoted in Stein, *Jung's Treatment of Christianity*, 5.

benefit to Christianity. However, Jung, in Answer to Job, went too far, even for White. In response to Jung's book, White wrote:

I just do not understand what is to be gained by the publication of such an outburst [referring to the book]...I can only see harm coming of it, not least to my own efforts to make analytical psychology acceptable to, and respected by, the Catholics and other Christians who need it so badly.⁶⁴

I might note here that White, himself, was suspect in his own religious community as having given up far too much ground to Jung.⁶⁵ Jung's Answer to Job was probably the last straw. It simply went too far afield from the position of the Church for White to maintain his dual allegiance.

Jung wrote White a lengthy response to his letter, in which he made clear his position in relation to the Church, which, of course, was not concerned with any type of allegiance whatsoever. He said:

Should I set the light of such an insight "under a bushel?" In peaceful and harmless conditions it would have been very unwise

⁶⁴ C.G.Jung, Letters, vol. 2, 213n.

⁶⁵ Personal communication from Hilary Martin in March, 1992

to movere quieta. But in our time everything is at stake, and one should not mind the little disturbance I am causing. It is a mere fleabite on the immense body of Christendom. If I am causing trouble to the peace of mind of serious theologians, I am sorry, but I really do not see why their sleep is better than mine. They have no prerogative to hide from the great wind of the world and to leave uncomfortable things to themselves...

My psychology unfortunately tries to be honest. It is certainly the hard way, neither an easy consolation nor a narcotic. Nobody touching it in earnest can avoid seeing the dark side and feeling it. Most certainly I shall never cover up the truth as I see it. The church can take it as one of the diabolic temptations of the world, and the world can condemn it as foolishness. I shall stick to my conviction that my Answer to Job is a straightforward application of my psychological principles to certain central problems of our religion. They can take it or leave it. Moreover they will do what they please, without asking me.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ C.G.Jung, Letters, vol. 2, 239-240.

White was unable to reconcile his theological differences with Jung and eventually, much to the hurt of both, parted company with Jung. White wrote Jung in May 1955, that "For myself, it seems that our ways must, at least to some extent, part. I shall never forget, and please God I shall never lose, what I owe to your work and friendship."⁶⁷ Jung never wrote back, except for two short notes in 1960 when he had been informed of White's serious illness.

Why had Jung felt the need to devote so much of his life work to a reinterpretation of Christianity, transmuting its symbols and dogmas into containers of psychological truths? This question has been belabored by many authors and I would refer the reader to Murray Stein's book on Christianity for a synopsis of the various opinions. Stein, himself, saw Jung's "relationship to Christianity as a psychotherapeutic one...Jung's stance toward Christianity was fundamentally that of a psychotherapist, and so the goal of all his efforts with this 'patient,' Christianity, was its psychotherapeutic transformation."⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Ibid., 251n.

⁶⁸ Murray Stein, Jung's Treatment of Christianity, 18.

The Christian understanding of God was spiritually, emotionally, and intellectually painful for Jung and, in fact, relentlessly tortured him. He was impelled by his own spiritual urgency to confront the Western God-image directly, as did Job, and seek from it meaning. Jung, himself, was a spiritual

man and his life revolved around the question of God. In a memorial to Jung, James Aylward, a Catholic priest, noted that over the door of Jung's house it states: "Called or not, God will be present."⁶⁹ In relating a conversation that he had with Jung, Aylward said:

Jung brings up God as the most proper subject of conversation between two human beings. He says that most people don't look on God as worthy of entry into a salon. People—even theologians—are embarrassed to talk about God. It is more polite to talk about sex.

But we stay with God and the images in which God is revealed and behind which God hides.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Ferne Jensen, ed. C.G. Jung, Emma Jung and Tony Wolff: A Collection of Remembrances (San Francisco: The Analytical Psychology Club of San Francisco, 1982), 6.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 7.

Christianity was Jung's religion but he was dead to it or it was dead to him. The Christian doctrines and dogmas were not numinous for him. They did not evoke his relationship to God. And yet, Jung pursued the Western God-image ceaselessly until he found its meaning for himself, which he passed on to us in the work most dear to him, *Answer to Job*.

Jung never turned his back on the Holy Scriptures, and in the final analysis, he saw them as "utterances of the soul"⁷¹ which had stood the test of time. He realized that the West had lived within the Christian myth for 2000 years and that the Western psyche had been formed around its symbols—the very symbols which the psyche, itself, had produced. To bring the symbols back to life, therefore, Jung looked to the psyche, their source, for answers and pursued the symbols there until they revealed to him their meaning. Jung said:

So long as religion is only faith and outward form, and the religious function is not experienced in our own souls, nothing of any importance has happened. It has yet to be understood that the *mysterium magnum* is not only an actuality but is first and foremost

⁷¹ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, par. 557. ⁷² C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Alchemy*, CW 12, par. 12.

rooted in the human psyche. The man who does not know this from his own experience may be a most learned theologian, but he has no idea of religion and still less of education.⁷²

Jung knew that his work of reinterpreting the Christian myth psychologically would have little meaning for a believing Christian whose psyche is still adequately contained by the dogma of the church. In fact, from such a person he would most likely face the same rejection that Jesus spoke of when he said "And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; if he does, the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost, and so are the skins; but new wine is for fresh skins."⁷³ Jung's new wine is not meant for believing Christians. But his work has a great deal of meaning for those who no longer find themselves included in the Christian myth. For them, new wine is needed. In *Psychology and Religion*, written in 1940, Jung said:

I do not expect any believing Christian to pursue these thoughts of mine any further, for they will probably seem to him absurd. I am not, however, addressing myself to the happy possessors of faith, but to those many people for whom the light has gone out, the

⁷³ Mark 2:33 RSV

⁷⁴ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, par. 148.

mystery has faded, and God is dead. For most of them there is no going back, and one does not know either whether going back is always the better way.⁷⁴

Why did Jung insist on using "old wineskins?" Lawrence Jaffe was responsible for making Jung's position on this clear to me and so I would like to quote him at length here.

It might reasonably be asked why modern-day depth psychology need concern itself with the Bible.

Even if we accept that buried in the scriptures are nuggets of psychological truth, surely the millennia that have elapsed since they were first set down have allowed us access to other, greater truths.

Edward Edinger explains that a fundamentally new psychic content can gain admission to consciousness

only by following a previously established pattern; [therefore] the new discoveries of depth psychology can find entry into the modern mind (in a truly deep-seated way) only by a reinterpretation of the earlier imagery which represents the prior patterns of these new truths.

Feeling lies just below the surface, so to speak, of the dried-up watercourses (the prior patterns). Hence the release of the new spiritual waters (the new psychological truths) will stir our feelings and revivify our depths.

Biblical imagery speaks directly to the soul of the Westerner. We have grown up with the sacred imagery all about us, but its mysterious power to evoke feelings probably has to do not with conditioning alone but with the very structure of the Western psyche. As the second-century church father Tertullian put it (perhaps overstating the case a bit), “The soul is by nature Christian.” This is because our psyche has revealed itself in terms of the Christian myth and centuries of devotion have hallowed it into substantiality.

For the new depth psychological discoveries about the human soul to take root in us, therefore, they must be formulated in terms of the earlier imagery.⁷⁵

Jung had a great respect for the reality of the psyche and, therefore, of the symbols and myths through which it has carried an ongoing communication with us. Over the course of time, the numinosity and veracity of our religious symbols have been lost, due

⁷⁵ Lawrence Jaffe, *Liberating the Heart*, 31-32.

to their externalization and dissociation from their psychic roots. Symbols, once they are concretized as physical realities and are dissociated from their source in the psyche, fall subject to dismissal as our knowledge of science gradually removes them from the realm of external possibilities and relegates them to the beliefs of a prior era. Jung, by psychologically reinterpreting our religious symbols, has carried them home to the psyche and filled them again with their own life blood. He clearly saw this as the only way open to us. As he said, “To gain an understanding of religious matters, probably all that is left us today is the psychological approach.”⁷⁶

Religious truths are not to be found in physical reality, but they are to be found in the reality of the psyche and in its relations to physical reality. If this is understood, then religious truths, based in the reality of the psyche, cannot be dismissed by science. But, neither can they dismiss science. Jung’s new myth reconciles science and religion by reinterpreting our Biblical symbols psychologically, thus pouring them into “the molds of our immediate experience.”⁷⁷

⁷⁶ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, par. 148.

⁷⁷ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, par. 148. See also Lawrence Jaffe, *Liberating the Heart*, 33.

An experience is empirically verifiable, even though the real nature or source of the experience may be beyond our epistemological limits. Accepting this limitation, still we cannot deny the actuality of the experience.

Jung used religious terminology to describe the experiences of the psyche. The psyche speaks in symbols which, collectively, have become our myths and religions. Therefore, the words which best describe psychic contents come out of our religious vocabulary. Jung acknowledged the confusion his psychological use of religious terminology would cause, but saw no alternative. He said:

The reader must pardon my use of metaphors that are linguistically analogous to dogmatic

expressions. If you have conceptions of things you can have no conceptions of, then the conception and the thing appear to coincide. Nor can two different things you know nothing of be kept apart. I must therefore expressly emphasize that I do not go in for either metaphysics or theology, but am concerned with psychological facts on the borderline of the knowable. So if I make use of certain expressions that are reminiscent of the language of theology, this is due solely to the poverty of language, and not because I am of the opinion that the subject-matter of theology is the same as that of psychology. Psychology is very definitely not a theology; it is a natural science that seeks to describe experienceable psychic phenomena. In doing so it takes account of the way in which theology conceives and names them, because this hangs together with the phenomenology of the contents under discussion. But as empirical science it has neither the capacity nor the competence to decide on questions of truth and value, this being the prerogative of theology.

But whatever Jung's intent, the power of language is inestimable. A religious description of the psyche and the ego's relationship with the Self will naturally bring about a religious relationship with one's subjective experiences and their source. If we refer to the unconscious as God, then, the unconscious becomes the new definition of God for those who accept it. The myths and symbols of Christianity, redefined psychologically, become the story of the ego's process of individuation as it matures in its relationship to the Self. Jung created a new religion, or, perhaps, more accurately, a transformed Christianity, by recasting its religious terms and symbols.

The Epistemological Limits of our Knowledge

Jung realized the darkness of ignorance which surrounded him. It was clear to him that the essential nature of images which present themselves to consciousness, whether of physical or psychic origin, lie outside the realm of empirical knowledge. The physical world is not directly experienced by us. We assume its presence based upon the mental images relayed to us through sense perception. Following the same logic, Jung postulated the existence of the unconscious to account for images and behavior that were not of physical origin. By the 'unconscious' Jung means that which is unconscious or unknown to the ego. What the 'unconscious' is from its own standpoint cannot be known, because by definition, it is outside of the conscious sphere of the ego. For this reason, nothing can be said of its nature, as Jung has so frequently stated:

⁷⁸ C.G. Jung, Letters, 249.

The nature of that psyche which reaches beyond my consciousness is essentially unknown to me. Therefore one aptly calls it the unconscious. Of course I wouldn't know of it if there were not parts of it that reach my consciousness, but the main body of this psyche is essentially unconscious to me, as its origins are equally unknown to me.⁷⁸

Whether we are dealing with the external world or the inner world of the psyche, our knowledge will always be limited by our means of knowledge. Jung, being ever aware of epistemological limits, was always careful to state the descriptive nature of his psychology:

Everything about this psychology is, in the deepest sense, experience; the entire theory, even where it puts on the most abstract airs, is the direct outcome of something experienced.⁷⁹

The questions of reality, eternity, infinity, purpose and meaning of the universe, in other words, the philosophical and religious questions of man cannot be answered by science. Science deals with the nature of and the relationships between measurable objects,

⁷⁹ C.G. Jung, Two Essays on Analytical Psychology, CW 7, par. 199.

not with their meaningful causes and teleological purposes. Questions of meaning must tap the unconscious realm of the psyche for answers. Jung said:

Since the unconscious, as the result of its spatio-temporal relativity, possesses better sources of information than the conscious mind—which has only sense perceptions available to it—we are dependent for our myth of life after death upon the meager hints of dreams and similar spontaneous revelations from the unconscious. As I have already said, we cannot attribute to these allusions the value of knowledge, let alone proof. They can, however, serve as suitable bases for mythic amplifications; they give the probing intellect the raw material which is indispensable for its vitality. Cut off the intermediary world of mythic imagination, and the mind falls prey to doctrinaire rigidities. On the other hand, too much traffic with these germs of myth is dangerous for weak and suggestible minds, for they are led to mistake vague intimations for

⁸⁰ C.G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, 316.

substantial knowledge, and to hypostatize mere phantasms.⁸⁰

Religions depend on revealed knowledge. One can only turn to God, or, synonymously, to the unconscious for answers to questions which “only God can know.” And to deny or turn away from the possibility of such communications is to live in despair, for, according to Jung, a relationship with God or the unconscious is instinctual and archetypal and thus must find adequate expression.

A person who has no relation with the unconscious has closed himself or herself off from his or her origins and has no sense of the eternal. How does such a person deal with his or her impending death? If a relationship with God is denied, then death becomes a dark abyss and life becomes meaningless in that it culminates in nothingness. Jung, discussing confrontation with death, states:

Death is an important interest, especially to an aging person. A categorical question is being put to him, and he is under an obligation to answer it. To this end he ought to have a myth about death, for reason shows him nothing but the dark pit into which he is descending. Myth, however, can conjure up other images for him, helpful and enriching pictures of life in the land of the dead. If he believes in them, or greets them with some measure of credence, he is being just as right or just as wrong as someone who does not believe in them. But while the man who despairs marches toward nothingness, the one who has placed his faith in the archetype follows the tracks of life and lives right into his death. Both, to be sure, remain in uncertainty, but the one lives against his instincts, the other with them.⁸¹

The psyche naturally assumes a life after death even though the scientifically oriented mind might consciously reject such ideas. Still, one cannot rid oneself of the thoughts. As Jung said:

Even now I can do no more than tell stories—”mythologize.” Perhaps one has to be close to death to acquire the necessary freedom to talk about it. It is not that I wish we had a life after death. In fact, I would prefer not to foster such ideas. Still, I must state, to give reality its due, that, without my wishing and without my doing anything about it, thoughts of this nature move about within me. I can’t say whether these thoughts are true or false, but I do know they are there, and can be given utterance, if I do not repress them out of some prejudice.⁸²

Rix Weaver recounted her experience of a very moving moment in Jung’s life during which Jung’s deepest feelings and convictions about the nature of life and death were bound to surface. It was the time when Jung was told that his wife would not recover from her illness. Weaver and Jung were in deep conversation about the nature of God when Jung was called away to answer a telephone call.

Jung was called away at that point and I waited quite awhile. When he returned there was a change. He told me the doctor had just called and that his dear wife would not recover. I offered to leave but he bade me stay. He then sat a little longer to speak. This time he said that: life has to be lived fully. One has to live what one is, utilize one’s potential. He spoke of his wife’s life and its completeness, then added, “Death is a drawing together of two worlds, not an end. We are the

bridge.”⁸³

⁸³ Ferne Jensen, ed. C.G. Jung, Emma Jung and Tony Wolff: A Collection of Remembrances, 95.

As an empirical scientist and psychologist, Jung’s work was not to incorporate the revealed knowledge of religions into his ideas, but rather to make psychological sense of those ideas based on the experience of the psyche. Scientifically, he could never justify extending experiences which took place within the psyche to transcendental, metaphysical realities. This he tried to leave to religion and philosophy, as much as the psyche would allow him to do so. However, it is unnatural to separate the image from its source. Though it is true that one relates, technically speaking, to the mental image of another person which is formed in the mind through sense perception, and has no contact with the person other than through the thought form, still, emotionally, one believes that one is responding and relating to the actual person, not just to his or her image. Similarly, with the God-image. One relates to God, not to the “mere” image, or imagination of Him. This would not tally with the affect of one’s experience. Elizabeth Howe, in one of her conversations with Jung, said:

Regardless of what he tried to do in remaining scientific in his writing, when he talked with me face to face he left no doubt in my mind that when he spoke of God he was speaking of more than the archetype of God. This is sharply emphasized in a statement he made after he had been talking most movingly about the use and need of prayer. “Why do I have to talk about God? Because He is everywhere! I am only the spoon in his kitchen.”⁸⁴

The Psyche’s Need to Know its Origins

Jung always struggled against making philosophical jumps or deductions which were not experientially verifiable. However, he also acknowledged the psyche’s propensity for doing just that without any concern whatsoever for epistemological limits. The myths and religions of the world can be viewed as the archetypal expressions of the psyche’s relationship to its source or God. And, our philosophical systems are perhaps the ego’s attempt to rationally understand these seemingly irrational metaphysical assertions of the psyche.

The psyche in its totality expresses itself multifariously in many ways. The nonrational, mythological, and metaphysical assertions of the psyche are as much a part of our psychology as are our conscious thought processes and thus must be taken into consideration when we try to understand the whole person. Jung says:

A psychology that satisfies the intellect alone can never be practical, for the totality of the psyche can never be grasped by intellect alone. Whether we will or no, philosophy keeps breaking through, because the psyche seeks an expression that will embrace its total nature.⁸⁵

The struggle to be whole and to give expression to our total nature is archetypal. We can never escape that need and it is as though the culmination of our wholeness depends upon reuniting or coming back into relationship with our origins. The psyche itself demands it. Eric Neumann, in his book, *The Origins and History of Consciousness*, says:

If our consciousness, with epistemological resignation, is constrained to regard the question of the beginning as unanswerable and therefore unscientific, it may be right; but the psyche, which can neither be taught nor led astray by the self-criticism of the conscious mind, always poses this question afresh as one that is essential to it.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ C.G. Jung, *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*, CW 7, par. 201.

⁸⁶ Eric Neumann, *The Origins and History of Consciousness* (Princeton: Bollingen Series, 1954), 7.

And also,

The problem around which mythological statements revolve and which was from the very

beginning the crucial question for man is really concerned with the origins of life, of the spirit and the soul.⁸⁷

Mythological statements are in the symbolic language of the psyche. Often, this language is unintelligible, but at the same time holds such a degree of numinosity that we accept its truth in spite of its irrational nature. For example, a person wholly contained within the Christian myth will believe in Christ's virgin birth and resurrection from the dead, even though these ideas are irrational from a scientific point of view. The psyche communicates to us in a symbolic language which we may not understand rationally but has such a compelling force that it can contain the ego and also propel it to search for understanding.

The ego cannot accept a purposeless existence. If it is not contained within a living myth which makes sense out of its existence, then it will suffer and yearn for a sense of meaning. Do innate urges or instincts exist which cannot be fulfilled due to the non-existence of the urge's counterpart? We do not find in the creation a yearning for that which does not exist. Of course, we certainly experience and suffer from unfulfilled urges, but the objects of those urges are at least existential possibilities.

Instinctual and archetypal needs are purposeful in that they are meant to complete themselves in the fulfillment of a function. For instance, the child's instincts to search for the breast and to suck fulfill themselves upon finding the breast and sucking the milk which the breast contains. This completes and satisfies the urge. The urge to breathe satisfies itself with the intake of air. The sexual urge satisfies itself with orgasm. If there were no breast, air, or orgasm, then the urges which seek them out would be meaningless.

Archetypes are meant to form completed pictures. Urges or patterns of reaction must have their corresponding objects with which to complete themselves. The archetypal urge, then, to reunite with one's origins should lead one to the fructification of that urge—to regaining the lost treasure.

The New Myth According to Jung

The reuniting of the ego with one's origins, that is, the relationship between the ego and the unconscious, was Jung's primary concern. He lived his life in dialogue with the unconscious, listening to it and allowing it to manifest itself in consciousness. In the first paragraph of his autobiography, he said:

My life is a story of the Self-realization of the unconscious. Everything in the unconscious seeks outward manifestation, and the personality too desires to evolve out of its unconscious conditions and to experience itself as a whole.⁸⁸

Jung's relationship to the unconscious was his relationship to God. He paid careful attention to God as He expressed Himself in the psyche, and service to God by being as conscious as possible gave meaning to his life.⁸⁹ His first conscious experience of God occurred when he was about twelve. He found himself

⁸⁸ C.G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, 3.

⁸⁹ I am indebted to Lawrence Jaffe for this sentence. Originally, I had stated that Jung's "surrender to the will of God gave meaning to his life." In a personal note (November 1992), Dr. Jaffe explained that "According to the Judeo-Christian myth, e.g., the Job story, God was angry at Job's 'comforters' who counseled him to surrender to God's will. Job's experience was that the punishment was undeserved and he was true to his experience, saying 'I will maintain my ways before him.' This, according to Jung, is what God requires." Since God is an antinomy, God's will requires our ethical evaluation and careful consideration, but not necessarily our surrender.

having a rather benign fantasy which all of the sudden threatened to develop into something sacrilegious and damning. The fantasy innocently began:

One fine summer day that same year I came out of school at noon and went to the cathedral square. The sky was gloriously blue, the day one of radiant sunshine. The roof of the cathedral glittered, the

sun sparkling from the new, brightly glazed tiles. “The world is beautiful and the church is beautiful, and God made all this and sits above it far away in the blue sky on a golden throne and...” Here came a great hole in my thought, and a choking sensation. I felt numbed, and knew only: “Don’t go on thinking now! Something terrible is coming, something I do not want to think, something I dare not even approach.”⁹⁰

Jung was terrified of completing his thought and spent several days in agony trying with all his might not to think the forbidden thought. At last, he was forced to succumb and the sacrilegious fantasy completed itself:

⁹⁰ Ibid., 36.

I gathered all my courage, as though I were about to leap forthwith into hell-fire, and let the thought come. I saw before me the cathedral, the blue sky. God sits on His golden throne, high above the world—and from under the throne an enormous turd falls upon the sparkling new roof, shatters it, and breaks the walls of the cathedral asunder.

So that was it! I felt an enormous, an indescribable relief. Instead of the expected damnation, grace had come upon me, and with it an unutterable bliss such as I had never known. I wept for happiness and gratitude. The wisdom and goodness of God had been revealed to me now that I had yielded to His inexorable command...It was obedience that had brought me grace, and after that experience I knew what God’s grace was. One must be utterly abandoned to God, nothing matters but fulfilling His will. Otherwise all is folly and meaninglessness.⁹¹

Jung listened to his psyche and was very conscious of being impelled to do things that were not his choice, but were imposed on him from an autonomous source.

⁹¹ Ibid., 39-40.

Coming to terms with this relationship was his life’s work. His was a religious life in the true sense of the word. He believed that man’s task was to create consciousness, helping God to become conscious of Himself on the one hand and for us to become conscious of and fulfill the will of God on the other. Such a process involves the ego’s coming into dialogue with both the light and dark sides of the psyche—the God who both blesses the world and drops turds on cathedrals. Jung said:

God acts out of the unconscious of man and forces him to harmonize and unite the opposing influences to which his mind is exposed from the unconscious.⁹²

According to Jung, God is a *complexio oppositorum*, containing all the opposites within Himself. “He is everything in its totality; therefore, among other things, he is total justice, and also its total opposite.”⁹³ “All possibilities are contained in him, and...there are in consequence no other possibilities than those which express him.”⁹⁴ “God is reality itself and therefore—last but not least—man.”⁹⁵

⁹² C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, par. 740.

⁹³ Ibid., par. 574.

⁹⁴ Ibid., par. 630.

Yahweh, the God of the Old Testament, best portrays Jung’s experience of God. Yahweh, containing all of the opposites in Himself, has a dual nature comprising both good and evil. Being an antinomy, He cannot be bound to the same moral codes as is man, but then neither can He be trusted in the same way that one might trust a man. Job said to Yahweh: “If I wash myself...never so clean, yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch.” “For he [Yahweh] is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment.”⁹⁶ And Jung had Yahweh say: “This is I, the creator of all the ungovernable, ruthless forces of Nature, which are not subject to any ethical laws. I, too, am an

amoral force of Nature, a purely phenomenal personality that cannot see its own back.”⁹⁷

Yahweh possessed and was subject to the farthest extremes of emotion and affect, from love and compassion to vengeful wrath, anger, and jealousy. For example, appearing to Moses on Mount Sinai, the Lord described Himself as:

a God compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in kindness and faithfulness, extending kindness to the thousandth generation, forgiving iniquity,

⁹⁶ Ibid., par. 566.

transgression, and sin; yet, He does not remit all punishment, but visits the iniquity of parents upon children and children’s children, upon the third and fourth generations.⁹⁸

In this verse, the Father protector and disciplinarian are extolled. But on other occasions, Yahweh reveals a more vengeful side to His nature, that can only cause us to shrink in horror and fear. Isaiah has Yahweh saying: “I will make your oppressors eat their own flesh, they shall be drunk with their own blood as with wine.”⁹⁹ Jung often refers to the 89th Psalm when he wants to emphasize Yahweh’s unreliability and lack of conscience. The verses he refers to are:

I will not remove from him my steadfast love, or be false to my faithfulness.
I will not violate my covenant,
or alter the word that went forth from my lips. Once for all I have sworn my holiness:
I will not lie to David.
His line shall endure forever,
his throne as long as the sun before me.
Like the moon it shall be established forever;

⁹⁸ Exodus, 34:6-7 Tanakh ⁹⁹ Isaiah 49:26 Tanakh

the witness in the skies is sure. Selah!

But now thou hast cast off and rejected,
thou art full of wrath against thy anointed. Thou hast renounced the covenant with thy servant; thou has trodden his crown in the dust.¹⁰⁰

Jung commented on these verses saying: Modern man, with his sensitive conscience, would have felt the black abyss opening and the ground giving way under his feet, for the least he expects of his God is that he should be superior to mortal man in the sense of being better, higher, nobler—but not his superior in the kind of moral flexibility and unreliability that do not jib even at perjury.¹⁰¹ Jung felt that morally and ethically the individual

was superior to God and that God was jealous of human beings and their consciousness. In Answer to Job, Jung said:

Yahweh abandons his faithful servant to the evil spirit and lets him fall without compunction or pity into the abyss of physical

¹⁰⁰ Psalm 89:33ff. RSV. See also C.G. Jung, Aion, CW 9ii, par. 169; C.G. Jung, Psychology and Religion: West and East, CW 11, par. 569; and Edward Edinger, Transformation of the God-Image, 39.

¹⁰¹ C.G. Jung, Psychology and Religion: West and East, CW 11, par. 570.

and moral suffering. From the human point of view Yahweh’s behavior is so revolting that one has to ask oneself whether there is not a deeper motive behind it. Has Yahweh some secret resistance against Job? That would explain his yielding to Satan. But what does man possess that God does not have? Because of his littleness, puniness, and defenselessness against the Almighty, he possesses, as we have already suggested, a somewhat keener consciousness based on self-reflection: he must, in order to survive, always be mindful of his impotence. God has no need of this circumspection, for

nowhere does he come up against an insuperable obstacle that would force him to hesitate and hence make him reflect on himself. Could a suspicion have grown up in God that man possesses an infinitely small yet more concentrated light than he, Yahweh, possesses? A jealousy of that kind might perhaps explain his behavior. It would be quite explicable if some such dim, barely understood deviation for the definition of a mere “creature” had aroused his divine suspicions.¹⁰²

And later, he said:

One can submit to such a God only with fear and trembling, and can try indirectly to propitiate the despot with unctuous praises and ostentatious obedience. But a relationship of trust seems completely out of the question to our modern way of thinking.¹⁰³

For Jung, God was a relatively unconscious and amoral being whom he could not trust. He was unjust and capable of mistreating him on a whim. In a footnote Jung says:

The naive assumption that the creator of the world is a conscious being must be regarded as a disastrous prejudice which later gave rise to the most incredible dislocations of logic. For example, the nonsensical doctrine of the *privatio boni* would never have been necessary had one not had to assume in advance that it is impossible for the consciousness of a good God to produce evil deeds. Divine unconsciousness and lack of reflection, on the other hand, enable us to form a conception of God which puts his actions beyond moral judgment and allows no conflict to arise between goodness and beastliness.¹⁰⁴

The problem of God was central to Jung’s life. How to come to terms with such a God, whose dark side was so ruthless? Marie-Louise von Franz described Jung’s relation to God as follows:

When Jung spoke of these things [man’s relation to God] he spoke with deep seriousness, and one realized that behind his cheerful manner there lived another Jung, the real Jung, who never ceased to struggle, passionately and with the greatest suffering, with the problem of God. Everything that happened to him, and everything that happened in the world, he referred to God, and put to him the questions: why, and to what purpose? Like Jacob at the ford he held fast to this dark, mysterious Other until his grace was revealed. If he had to choose between “the world” and “God,” he never hesitated in deciding which to follow; the mystery of the Self was always the decisive factor in his life. “But anyone who attempts to do both, to adjust to his group and at the

¹⁰⁴ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, 383 fn 13. See also Edward Edinger, *Transformation of the God-Image*, 51.

same time pursue his individual goal, becomes neurotic. Our modern Jacob would be concealing from himself the fact that the angel was after all the stronger of the two—as he certainly was, for no claims were ever made that the angel, too, came away with a limp.” Jung knew that God’s messenger is the stronger, therefore he never turned away from the struggle. When he was once asked how he could live with the knowledge he had recorded in *Answer to Job*, he replied “I live in my deepest hell, and from there I cannot fall any further.”¹⁰⁵

Jung’s disturbing statement, “I live in my deepest hell and from there I cannot fall any further. ...”¹⁰⁶ needs some elaboration. Jung saw God as an antinomy containing both good and evil, not bound by any form of ethics or morals. God, in His light aspect, consoles and evokes love, but God, in His dark aspect, has to be feared. Jung explained his relationship to God through *Job*. I find in these very poignant and moving words the essence of Jung’s relationship to God. He said:

¹⁰⁵ Marie-Louise von Franz, *C.G. Jung: His Myth in Our Time* (New York: G.P Putnam’s Sons, 1975), 174.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

Job, in spite of his doubt as to whether man can be just before God, still finds it difficult to

relinquish the idea of meeting God on the basis of justice and therefore morality. Because, in spite of everything, he cannot give up his faith in divine justice, it is not easy for him to accept the knowledge that divine arbitrariness breaks the law. On the other hand, he has to admit that no one except Yahweh himself is doing him injustice and violence. He cannot deny that he is up against a God who does not care a rap for any moral opinion and does not recognize any form of ethics as binding. This is perhaps the greatest thing about Job, that, faced with this difficulty, he does not doubt the unity of God. He clearly sees that God is at odds with himself—so totally at odds, that he, Job, is quite certain of finding in God a helper and an “advocate” against God. As certain as he is of the evil in Yahweh, he is equally certain of the good. In a human being who renders us evil we cannot expect at the same time to find a helper. But Yahweh is not a human being: he is both a persecutor and a helper in one, and the one aspect is as real as the other. Yahweh is not split but is an antinomy—a totality of inner opposites—and this is the indispensable condition for his tremendous dynamism, his omniscience and omnipotence. Because of this knowledge Job holds on to his intention of “defending his ways to his face,” i.e. of making his point of view clear to him, since notwithstanding his wrath, Yahweh is also man’s advocate against himself when man puts forth his complaint.¹⁰⁷

Jung’s Answer to Job is perhaps the fullest statement of the Jungian myth and of Jung’s work. Jung has often been quoted as saying of this book that “he would like to rewrite all of his books except Answer to Job, but he would leave that one just as it stands.”¹⁰⁸ It is “the one work with which Jung was completely satisfied.”¹⁰⁹

Edinger, in his commentary on Answer to Job, stated that anyone who really understood what Jung was saying in this book would be offended.

As soon as you begin to look honestly into the material in this book you realize that it’s

¹⁰⁷ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, par. 567.

¹⁰⁸ Marie-Louise von Franz, *C.G. Jung: His Myth in Our Time*, 161, quoted in Edward Edinger, *Transformation of the God-Image*, 7.

¹⁰⁹ Edward Edinger, *Transformation of the God-Image*, 20.

going to offend almost everybody. And if you’re not offended, you probably don’t understand what he’s saying.¹¹⁰

It was only after many readings of Answer to Job that I recognized the way in which I, myself, felt offended. Initially, I did not understand Jung’s intent. How could Jung feel “completely satisfied”¹¹¹ with Answer to Job, whose vision of God left Jung, himself, in hell and would drag us into hell with him if we were to follow his path? Did Jung’s vision, in fact, leave him in hell?

Jung would not have looked at his life in this way. In a world comprised of opposites, a human being cannot experience only one side of the pole, without gathering a very heavy shadow. To not experience the dark side of reality is to repress or disown one side of it, keeping it outside of consciousness. The repression or disavowal of one’s own darkness denies God the opportunity to process or transform His dark side in consciousness. Jung wanted to make himself available to God for this, which he saw as God’s secret intention. The exposure to the dark side of God is to experience hell. But Jung saw this as his work and he willingly

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 23.

and willfully, though sometimes grudgingly, accepted it. He said:

Can man stand a further increase of consciousness?... Is it really worthwhile that man should progress morally and intellectually? Is that gain worth the candle? That’s the question...I confess that I submitted to the divine power of this apparently unsurmountable problem and I consciously and intentionally made my life miserable, because I wanted God to be alive and free from the suffering

man has put on him by loving his own reason more than God's secret intentions.¹¹²

It is important to remember, as Edinger frequently points out, that Jung's relationship with God is his relationship to the unconscious. In his commentary on Answer to Job, Edinger said:

Our affects are the inner manifestations of Yahweh. This is a crucial understanding. If you don't get this you will not understand Answer to Job...Yahweh = the unconscious.¹¹³

¹¹² Jung wrote this in a letter which was quoted by Gerhard Adler, "Aspects of Jung's Personality and Work," *Psychological Perspectives*, 6 (Spring 1975), p. 12 which was quoted in Edward Edinger, *The Creation of Consciousness*, 1984, 107.

Keeping this in mind, we can understand Jung's judgment of God much more easily. If Yahweh = the unconscious, then God's desire to incarnate in the human being can be understood as the unconscious desiring to be assimilated into consciousness by the ego. The ego is in God's service by allowing God (the unconscious) to become conscious through it. And at the same time, by the same process, the ego becomes whole through the process of assimilating God (the unconscious) into consciousness. The ego must allow into consciousness the *complexio oppositorum* and then contain the opposites in consciousness. This is the incarnation of God in man. And it is a moral task for man, for he must be able to acknowledge both the good and evil present in his own psyche and then choose his response. Both sides of God seek entry into consciousness.

It is a difficult task for the ego to assimilate the dark side of the unconscious. Painful or negative emotions—such as wrath, fear, anger, enmity, jealousy, envy, hurt, shame, to name a few of the basic ones—will be defended against when possible. At least, we do not seek them out—one rarely seeks out what will make him or her miserable. To open oneself to one's dark side is, in a sense, to seek out and accept pain. Rather than becoming conscious of our own evils and thereby taking responsibility for their containment, it is easier to allow them to remain repressed and then to quite unconsciously project them outside onto others who can then hold the evil for us. What the ego represses will project externally and then the ego, claiming innocence, will fight to protect itself against it.

To acknowledge the dark side of God rather than to project a devil or to blame others for the evils that befall one or the world requires a different concept of God than that which has been handed down to us through Christianity. But as Barbara Hannah points out:

To me, personally, it is a much more bearable thought to conceive of a whole God who contains all opposites—and, like nature, creates and destroys—than to see the worldwide outbreak of evil as the work of God's enemy, the devil, or as man's own fault, while an only good and omnipotent God apparently does nothing to prevent him or us from perpetrating that evil.¹¹⁴

Jung said that: God prepared us for the incarnation of His dark side by first incarnating His good side as Christ. "At first, God incarnated His good side in order, as we may suppose, to create the most durable basis

¹¹⁴ Barbara Hannah, *Encounters with the Soul: Active Imagination* (Sigo Press, 1981), 247.

for a later assimilation of the other side." ¹¹⁵ During the Christian era, God was all good and Satan was all evil. Now we are uniting these opposites within one God, within one psyche. No longer can we afford to repress the dark side. Now, both aspects need to be united in consciousness and this involves the human being in a new responsibility. Jung said:

God is not only to be loved, but also to be feared. He fills us with evil as well as with good, otherwise he would not need to be feared; and because he wants to become man, the uniting of his antinomy must take place in man. This involves man in a new responsibility. He can no longer wriggle out of it on the pleas of his littleness and nothingness, for the dark God has slipped the atom bomb and chemical weapons into his hands and given him the power to empty out the apocalyptic vials of wrath on his fellow creatures. Since he has been granted an almost godlike power, he can no

longer remain blind and unconscious. He must know something of God's nature and of metaphysical processes if he is to understand himself and thereby achieve gnosis of the Divine.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, par. 741. ¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, par. 747.

It is the dark aspect of God, the vengeful, wrathful, destroying, irresponsible, unreflective, barely conscious God, that we hide from our consciousness. It was this hidden and repressed aspect of God that Jung had to allow into consciousness and in doing so, brought about a reconciliation of the opposites within God and within himself. Such a task, the reconciliation of the *complexio oppositorum* in the unity and wholeness of the Self was Jung's explanatory myth which gave meaning to his life. He defined it in this way:

Man's task is...to become conscious of the contents that press upward from the unconscious. Neither should he persist in his unconsciousness nor remain identical with the unconscious elements of his being, thus evading his destiny, which is to create more and more consciousness. As far as we can discern, the sole purpose of human existence is to kindle a light in the darkness of mere being. It may even be assumed that just as the unconscious affects us, so the increase in our consciousness affects the unconscious.¹¹⁷

And,

¹¹⁷ C.G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, 326, quoted in Edward Edinger, *The Creation of Consciousness: Jung's Myth for Modern Man*, 16.

Once [the union of opposites] has been experienced, the ambivalence in the image of a nature-god or Creator-god ceases to present difficulties. On the contrary, the myth of the necessary incarnation of God—the essence of the Christian message—can then be understood as man's creative confrontation with the opposites and their synthesis in the self, the wholeness of his personality. The unavoidable internal contradictions in the image of a Creator-god can be reconciled in the unity and wholeness of the self as the *coniunctio oppositorum* of the alchemists or as a *unio mystica*. In the experience of the self it is no longer the opposites "God" and "man" that are reconciled, as it was before, but rather the opposites within the God-image itself. That is the meaning of divine service, of the service which man can render to God, that light may emerge from the darkness, that the Creator may become conscious of His creation, and man conscious of himself.

That is the goal or one goal, which fits man meaningfully into the scheme of creation, and at the same time confers meaning upon it. It is an explanatory myth which has slowly taken shape within me in the course of decades. It is a goal I can acknowledge and esteem, and which therefore satisfies me.¹¹⁸

According to the Jungian myth, we are helping God realize His divine plan. In his memoirs, Jung told the story of the Pueblo Indians who help God carry the sun across the sky. Without their prayers the sun would stop rising. They are helping God to do His work and thus their life becomes meaningful because of their meaningful relationship with God. Jung also had this idea. He felt that in order to have a meaningful relationship with God he must somehow be needed by God. Otherwise, he would be just the pawn or plaything of God with no real purpose to serve. And so, in his myth, he comes into a more mature relationship with a God that needs him as he needs God. Jung said:

Man's relation to God probably had to undergo a certain important change: Instead of the propitiating praise to an unpredictable king or the child's prayer to a loving father, the responsible living and fulfilling of the divine will in us will be our form of worship of and commerce with God.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ C.G. Jung, *Letters*, vol. 2, 316, quoted in Lawrence Jaffe, *Liberating the Heart*, 24.

Edinger summarizes Jung's myth with the statement: "The essential new idea is that the purpose of human life is the creation of consciousness."¹²⁰ The ego's relationship with the Self is a living dialogue, wherein the ego's careful consideration of the numinous images and affects emerging from the unconscious allows their assimilation into consciousness. This process of assimilation works toward the wholeness of the personality as unconscious aspects of the personality gain consciousness, which is, when looked at from the side of the unconscious, God's coming into consciousness. This process of creating consciousness affects both the ego and God. God changes as He is seen by the ego. "Whoever knows God has an effect on him."¹²¹ Edinger stated that this statement of Jung's "epitomizes the entire book [Answer to Job]."¹²² For Jung, this commerce with God gives meaning and purpose to our existence. And it also makes sense of Jung's work as an analyst. Edinger said:

I don't think we can overestimate what a revolutionary and profound fact and discovery is expressed by this simple sentence. I think this is how psychotherapy

¹²⁰ Edward Edinger, *The Creation of Consciousness*, 17.

¹²¹ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, par. 617, quoted in Edward Edinger, *Transformation of the God-Image*, 61.

¹²² Edward Edinger, *Transformation of the God-Image*, 61.

works. As the analyst comes to know the nature of the unconscious of the patient, as the analyst is able to perceive the abysmal world of shards that resides in the unconscious of the patient, as the analyst is able to get behind it, so to speak—to see it—that act of having-been-seen has an effect.¹²³

In order to really understand the Jungian myth, it is essential that we grasp Jung's concept of God. In light of the material just presented, I would like to summarize Jung's position. Jung believed that our concepts of God, as represented in the myths, religions, philosophies, and personal beliefs throughout the world and throughout the ages, are archetypal expressions of the objective psyche. The objective psyche is, in fact, God, for all practical purposes. If a transcendent God does exist, we have no way of knowing or experiencing Him. Remember Edinger's statement that "Yahweh = the unconscious."¹²⁴ Jung said:

If I assume that God is absolute and beyond all human experience, he leaves me cold. I do not affect him, nor does he affect me. But if I know that he is a powerful impulse of my

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 37.

soul, at once I must concern myself with him, for then he can become important, even unpleasantly so, and can affect me in practical ways—which sounds horribly banal, like everything else that is real...The same people who think that God is depreciated if he is understood as something moved in the psyche, as well as the moving force of the psyche, —i.e., as an autonomous complex— can be so plagued by uncontrollable affects and neurotic states that their wills and their whole philosophy of life fail them miserably... I think the accusation of "psychologism" can be leveled only at an intellect that denies the genuine nature of the autonomous complex and seeks to explain it rationalistically as the consequence of known causes, i.e., as something secondary and unreal. This is just as arrogant as the metaphysical assertion that seeks to make a God outside the range of our experience responsible for our psychic states.¹²⁵

And,

Psychology...treats all metaphysical claims and assertions as mental phenomena, and regards them as statements about the mind

¹²⁵ C.G. Jung, *Alchemical Studies*, CW 13, par. 74.

and its structure that derive ultimately from certain unconscious dispositions ... Psychology...holds that the mind cannot establish or assert anything beyond itself.¹²⁶

Jung knows and often states, however, that the unconscious is truly unconscious and, therefore, we cannot know its nature or its relationship to a transcendent reality. The source of the God-image must remain unknown. And the same is true for perceptual images. There is no way of knowing what a tree looks like apart from its mental image reflected in our psyche. The image, of course, is not the tree, but we trust that it represents, on some level, something which is other than the image, that is, the object of the image. The question is whether the same logic holds true for the God-image and other phantasms of the psyche. Are they also representations of something other than the image?

Jung is the first to assert the reality of the psyche. Unless we take the solipsistic view that our perception of the external as well as the internal world is nothing but our subjective imaginings with no relation to an object, then the image that is produced must have some relation to the thing in itself, though what that

¹²⁶ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, par. 760.

relation is, is unclear. Jung will often take a neutral position on this, saying that it is impossible to comment on the reality of anything outside of the image perceived in the psyche. He said:

It seems to me at least highly improbable that when a man says "God" there must in consequence exist a God such as he imagines, or that he necessarily speaks of a real being. At any rate he can never prove that there is something to correspond with his statement on the metaphysical side, just as it can never be proved to him that he is wrong. Thus it is at best a question of non liquet, and it seems to me advisable under these circumstances and in view of the limitations of human knowledge to assume from the start that our metaphysical concepts are simply anthropomorphic images and opinions which express transcendental facts either not at all or only in a very hypothetical manner. Indeed we know already from the physical world around us that in itself it does not necessarily agree in the least with the world as we perceive it. The physical world and the perceptual world are two very different things. Knowing this we have no encouragement whatever to think that our metaphysical picture of the world corresponds to the transcendental reality.¹²⁷

Jung acknowledges the reality of the image but he can neither assert nor deny its relation to an object. Our interpretation of the image may or may not correspond to reality. We have no way of knowing. Aniela Jaffe quoted Jung, saying:

Man can observe neither God, nor nature, nor the unconscious "in themselves". "We are fully aware that we have no more knowledge of the various states and processes of the unconscious as such than the physicist has of the process underlying physical phenomena. Of what lies beyond the phenomenal world we can have absolutely no idea..." The only thing of which we have immediate knowledge is the psychic image reflected in consciousness. "To the extent that the world does not assume the form of a psychic image, it is virtually nonexistent."¹²⁸

¹²⁷ C.G. Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, CW 14, par. 781.

¹²⁸ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, par.769, quoted in Aniela Jaffe, *The Myth of Meaning*, trans. R.F.C. Hull (Zurich: Daimon, 1984), 41.

Keeping this in view, any interpretation of the God-image or the divine drama is the interpretation of a human being subject to error. In a very interesting letter to Mary Louise Ainsworth, Jung really tries to clarify the difference between our human conceptions of God and God, Himself. He says, and I will quote his letter in full:

Dear, Miss Ainsworth,

I have read your friendly letter with interest. I have been particularly interested in what you say about the book of Job, i.e., the divine omniscience.

While reading this little book you must be constantly aware of the fact, that whatever I say in it, does not refer to God Himself, but rather to the idea or opinion, man makes of God to himself.

When I use the term “the omniscient God” it means: this is what man says about God and not that God is omniscient. Man always uses that knowledge, he finds in himself, to characterize his metaphysical figures. Thus you could make an analogy between the obliviousness of the human being and a state of his God. But this is insofar not permissible as man himself has made the dogmatic statement, that God’s omniscience is absolute, and not subject to man’s shortcomings. Thus God’s omniscience means really a perfect presence of mind and then only it becomes a blatant contradiction, that He does not consult it, or seems to be unaware of it. In this sense ‘God’ is very paradoxical and I call my reader’s attention to such and other contradictions, to wake him up, so that he gets aware of the insufficiency of his representations and indirectly of the need to revise them.

This is the point, which is regularly misunderstood: people assume that I am talking about God Himself. In reality I am talking about human representations. So if anybody should talk to you about my Job, you better refer him to this passage.

With my best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

I remain

Yours sincerely,

C.G. Jung¹²⁹

Human interpretations of numinous experiences are necessarily based on our limited knowledge. Jung is the first to acknowledge this. His own myth was based on his psychological interpretation of the

¹²⁹ Ferne Jensen, ed., C.G. Jung, Emma Jung and Tony Wolff: A Collection of Remembrances, 113.

Western God-image and subject to his own limitations. Whether his work will stand the test of time, and as Edinger feels it will, remains to be seen. Is his work a new scripture which will give a renewed sense of meaning and purpose to the Western psyche? Is his myth complete? Does it satisfy the longings of the soul for God?

According to Jungian myth, God is ultimately an antinomy containing within Himself all polar opposites inclusive of good and evil. There is nothing, in Jung’s view, beyond this antinomy. The very ground of existence comprises the opposites and therefore includes as much evil as it does good. The human being is the crucible which must contain and suffer this unconscious God as He incarnates both His light and dark aspects in us. It is the human being, not God, who has a moral code, who has an obligation to do what is good and ethical. This moral code does not extend to God. God can do whatever He pleases. He is not bound as is the human.

Truly, Yahweh can do all things and permits himself all things without batting an eyelid. With brazen countenance he can project his shadow side and remain unconscious at man’s expense. He can boast of his superior power and enact laws which mean less than air to him. Murder and manslaughter are mere bagatelles, and if the mood takes him he can play the feudal grand seigneur and generously recompense his bondsman for the havoc wrought in his wheat-fields.¹³⁰

God can and will incarnate His darkest aspects in the human being and the human being is left to suffer, either holding the darkness within himself or herself and containing it because it is against his or her moral code to act it out, or, he or she succumbs to the darkness and does an evil act impulsively, or he or she identifies with the darkness and becomes an evil person. One way or another, a person is forced to contend with the darkness of God. God has no concerns, the human

being does. The human is the moral ethical being. It is the human that takes responsibility for his or her actions and for the welfare of his or her fellow beings, not God. God is seemingly next to unconscious. He is amoral. He does not weigh the effects of His actions. He can as well murder millions of people senselessly as in the Holocaust, or as the tradition goes, He can crucify His only begotten son who spent his life in total devotion to Him, or He can strike out at Job, His most faithful servant, simply to win a bet with Satan. Such a

¹³⁰ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, par. 597.

God is not worthy of any sort of trust, but certainly worthy of one's dread and fear.

Jung envisioned God as a relatively unconscious being not bound by ethics or morals or justice. Is there, then, no moral order to the universe, no justice? Are events such as the torture of Job, the crucifixion of Christ, and the Holocaust accounted for by and possible because of the unconsciousness and amorality of a reckless vengeful jealous God? Where is there a refuge for humanity in this vision? How should we relate to such a God? In a letter to Victor White, Jung writes:

There is no comfort and no consolation anywhere except in the submission to and the acceptance of the self, or you may call it the God that suffers in His own creation.¹³¹

And,

Even if a peaceful nature has reached a certain higher level of consciousness he cannot escape the raging conflict of opposites in his soul, as God wants to unite His opposites in man. As soon as a more honest and more complete consciousness beyond the collective

¹³¹ C.G. Jung, *Letters*, vol. 2, 241.

level has been established, man is no more an end in himself, but becomes an instrument of God, and this is really so and no joke about it.¹³²

God is an antinomy, He is both good and evil. Therefore, the one who will destroy us is the same one who will save us. "Yahweh is not a human being: he is both a persecutor and a helper in one, and the one aspect is as real as the other."¹³³ According to Jung, our present task and purpose is to contain the incarnation of God's dark side, enabling God to transform Himself within the crucible of the human ego. Edinger summarizes this task, saying:

If the individual stands over against the primitive Yahweh-affects within him; if he allows them to live without repressing them and without identifying with them; if he struggles to extract the images and meaning that lie embedded in them; if he patiently and diligently seeks the way of individuation which the unconscious both reveals and withholds—then his efforts will have a gradual transformative effect on Yahweh. He

¹³² *Ibid.*, 242.]

¹³³ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, par. 567. See also page 56.

will be offering himself as a crucible for the transformation of the dark God and contributing his widow's mite to the cosmic drama of continuing creation.¹³⁴

Jung mythologized the ego's relationship to the Self through his reinterpretation of the Christian myth. According to Jung, Job sought a dialogue with Yahweh. He presented his case to Yahweh and asked for a response. This act of the ego (Job) brings the Self (Yahweh) into consciousness, giving Yahweh the opportunity to see Himself in the mirror of Job. Such a confrontation has a transformative effect on both Yahweh and Job.

Yahweh became conscious of Himself through Job. Jung suggested that perhaps Yahweh envied Job's consciousness and was jealous and mistrustful of Job because of it.¹³⁵ This was the cause for Yahweh's submission to Satan's wager. In psychological terms, Yahweh's shadow was projected

onto Job and then attacked. When Yahweh became aware of His injustice He needed to redeem Himself. Job had behaved ethically where Yahweh had not. In order to make up for the wrong that He had done to Job, Yahweh

¹³⁴ Edward F. Edinger, *The Creation of Consciousness*, 90. ¹³⁵ Please refer to quote on page 77 of this dissertation.

incarnated the good side of Himself as Christ and by so doing, brought into consciousness the benign side of God, leaving the dark side of God repressed in the unconscious. Then, as a Self punishment for His abuse of Job, Yahweh allowed Himself to be crucified. This was His retribution. Up to the Job event, God lacked ethics in His relationship to man. Through His incarnation in Christ, God became the loving father, repressing His dark side and projecting it outside of Himself as Satan.¹³⁶

In His process of transformation, Yahweh had to incarnate His good side into consciousness first, in order to pave the way or to build adequate support for His dark side. Only when the ego has become

¹³⁶ As mentioned earlier, Victor White and others complained against Jung's interpretation of scripture as being ill-informed and naive. Hilary Martin (personal communication, September 1992) criticized Jung, saying that "Jung was not a particularly good exegete, and his vision of what the New Testament says is pretty much his own." Jung was aware that his psychological interpretation of Christian symbols would bitterly offend the Christian community and that he did not follow a traditional exegesis of scripture. However, he felt that his work had great meaning for those people who no longer believe in the Christian interpretation of those symbols and yet had grown up with them. According to Jung, a symbol, by its very nature, points to something unknown and has a numinous quality to it, if it is still functioning as a symbol. The Christian symbols, as interpreted by the Church, have lost much of their numinosity because concretized dogmas are scientifically impossible. Jung's work was to bring the symbols back to life through a psychological interpretation which could not be negated by science.

strong enough to contain the dark side without acting it out, will it be able to assist in the transformation of God without itself being destroyed.

The darkness of the shadow can be integrated without ill effects only if we have become sufficiently conscious of the light: the sense of one's own value should not get lost, darkness should not gain the upper hand. The incarnation of good is a necessary prelude if we are to hold out against evil. "We therefore need more light, more goodness and moral strength, and must wash off as much of the obnoxious blackness as possible, otherwise we shall not be able to assimilate the dark god who also wants to become man, and at the same time endure him without perishing. For this all the Christian virtues are needed and something else besides, for the problem is not only moral: we also need the wisdom that Job was seeking."¹³⁷

The Transformation of the God-Image

Our God-images are those images which are produced in the psyche when filled with the affect of the Self, which can perhaps be described as sacred wholeness. All archetypal images emanate from the objective psyche, but the God-image is based on the

¹³⁷ "Answer to Job", par. 742

nature of the Self which is the central guiding principle of the psyche in its entirety and therefore is our most central and sacred image, an image which defines our understanding of and relationship to God.

Jung traced the development of the God-image in Answer to Job. Job, according to Jung, was a turning point in the transformation of the God-image. He said, "The Book of Job is a landmark in the long historical development of the divine drama."¹³⁸ The "divine drama" is a chronicle of the transformation of the God-image.

The God-image, which is held by our religious myths, determines and organizes the ego's relationship to the Self, giving it the imagistic channels through which our psychic energy can flow,

relating the created ego to its creator and container, the Self. As the God-image transforms itself through time, our relationship to God must also change. As the terms of this relationship change, a new dispensation comes into being. Edinger defines the term, “dispensation” as follows: The Latin word dispensatio was used to render the Greek oikonomia, which means literally

¹³⁸ Ibid., par. 560.

administration of a household...It is as though man's relation to the hidden mystery of God must be dispensed or administered much as the economy of a household is administered. In psychological terms it means, I think, the provision of a world-view that relates man (ego) to God (archetypal psyche) and promoted the smooth transfer of energy from one realm to the other.¹³⁹

According to Joachim of Flora, an Italian mystic and theologian, there are three periods (dispensations) of world history. They are: (1) the Age of the law, or of the Father; (2) the Age of the Gospel, or of the Son; and (3) the Age of the Holy Spirit, or of Contemplation.¹⁴⁰

Jung found the ideas of Joachim of Flora useful to explicate and amplify his own vision of the transforming God-image. In his famous letter to Elined Kotschnig, in which he elaborated his conception of the Western God-image, Jung said:

The religious spirit of the West is characterized by a change of God's image in

¹³⁹ Edward F. Edinger, *The Creation of Consciousness*, 88-89.

¹⁴⁰ C.G. Jung, *Letters*, vol. 2, 136n. See also, Lawrence W. Jaffe, *Liberating the Heart*, 19-20, and Edward Edinger, *The Creation of Consciousness*, 90.

the course of ages. Its history begins with the plurality of the Elohim, then it comes to the paradoxical Oneness and personality of Yahweh, then to the good Father of Christianity, followed by the second person in the Trinity, Christ, i.e., God incarnated in man. The allusion to the Holy Ghost is a third form appearing at the beginning of the second half of the Christian age (Gioacchino da Fiore), and finally we are confronted with the aspect revealed through the manifestations of the unconscious.¹⁴¹

In the same letter, he gives a more detailed account of the changing God-image during the first two dispensations. Jung said:

When the original Jewish conception of a purposeful and morally inclined God marked the end of the playful and rather purposeless existence of the polytheistic deities in the Mediterranean sphere, the result was a paradoxical conception of the supreme being, finding its expression in the idea of divine justice and injustice. The clear recognition of the fatal unreliability of the deity led Jewish

¹⁴¹ C.G. Jung, *Letters*, vol. 2, 314-315.

prophecy to look for a sort of mediator or advocate, representing the claims of humanity before god. As you know, this figure is already announced in Ezekiel's vision of Man and Son of Man. The idea was carried on by Daniel and then in the Apocryphal writings, particularly in the figure of the female Demiurge, viz., Sophia, and in the male form of an administrator of justice, the Son of Man, in the Book of Enoch, written about 100 B.C. and very popular at the time of Christ. It must have been so well-known, indeed, that Christ called himself “son of Man” with the evident presupposition of everybody knowing what he was talking about. Enoch is exactly what the Book of Job expects the advocate of man to be, over against the lawlessness and moral unreliability of Yahweh. The recently discovered scrolls of the Dead Sea mention a sort of legendary mystical figure, viz. “the Teacher of Justice.” I think he is parallel to or identical with Enoch. Christ obviously took up this idea, feeling that his task was to represent the role of the “Teacher of Justice” and thus of a Mediator; and he was up against an unpredictable and lawless God who would need a most drastic sacrifice to appease His wrath, viz. the slaughter of His own son. Curiously enough, as on the one hand his selfsacrifice means

admission of the Father's amoral nature, he taught on the other hand a new image of God, namely that of a Loving Father in whom there is no darkness. This enormous antinomy needs some explanation. It needed the assertion that he was the Son of the Father, i.e., the incarnation of the Deity in man. As a consequence the sacrifice was a self-destruction of the amoral god, incarnated in a mortal body. Thus the sacrifice takes on the aspect of a highly moral deed, of a selfpunishment, as it were.¹⁴²

Edinger, following Jung's interpretation of the ideas of Joachim of Flora, refers to this third Age of the Holy Spirit as the psychological dispensation. According to Edinger, we are now moving into this new age.¹⁴³ He says:

The Christian dispensation brought about a new *oikonomia* to administer man's relation to

¹⁴² C.G. Jung, *Letters*, vol. 2, 312-313.

¹⁴³ According to Joachim of Flora, the Age of the Holy Spirit began in the sixth century with St. Benedict. Please see C.G. Jung, *Aion*, CW 91, par. 137.

the divine. That mode of administration is now largely exhausted, and, if my perception is accurate, a new mode is on the horizon, namely depth psychology. The new psychological dispensation finds man's relation to God in the individual's relation to the unconscious. This is the new context, the new vessel with which humanity can be the carrier of divine meaning.

In essence, the Jewish dispensation was centered in the law, the Christian dispensation was centered in faith, and the psychological dispensation is centered in experience. God is now to be carried experientially by the individual.¹⁴⁴

Lawrence Jaffe paraphrased Edinger and expanded on this idea, saying:

The first or Jewish dispensation was centered on the law and on a collectivity, that is, the Israelites, a chosen people, the first-born of God and the sacrificed of God.

The second or Christian dispensation was centered on faith and on a single individual

¹⁴⁴ Edward F. Edinger, *The Creation of Consciousness*, 90.

conceived of as divine, Jesus Christ the chosen one, the first-born of God and the sacrificed of God.

The third, the new or Psychological dispensation, is centered in the personal experience and on each individual considered as partaking of the divine, and on each of us as the chosen one, the first-born of God and the sacrificed of God.¹⁴⁵

The task for each dispensation is different as our concept of God determines our relationship to Him. As the God-image changes, our self-definition and self-purpose also changes, as our sense of meaning and purpose must ultimately link themselves with our concept of God. With the onset of the third dispensation, we are becoming more directly related to God and our individual participation in the divine drama is becoming more significant. Lawrence Jaffe expressed it this way:

As we approach the Aquarian age we move under the influence of a new myth, which we here have called the Psychological dispensation. This ruling principle

¹⁴⁵ Lawrence W. Jaffe, *Liberating the Heart*, 20.

supersedes the Jewish and Christian dispensations, and requires us to forge an individual conscious connection with unconscious contents which in the past were projected in religious images.

In the Jewish dispensation a group, the Israelites, were bound to God in a covenant. In the Christian dispensation a single figure, the god-man Christ, was bound to God as His child. Now, in the Psychological dispensation, we are each bound to God who is incarnating in us.¹⁴⁶

Jung says:

We have become participants of the divine life and we have to assume a new responsibility, viz.

the continuation of the divine self-realization, which expresses itself in the task of our individuation. Individuation does not only mean that man has become truly human as distinct from animal, but that he becomes adult, responsible for his existence, knowing that

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 165.

he does not only depend on God, but that God also depends on man.¹⁴⁷

The Assumption of Mary

In 1950, the Pope announced as dogma the bodily assumption of Mary into heaven. Though such an assertion broke with the normal tradition of the church, in that a dogma by definition must have its roots in the words of Christ or the apostles, still, the Pope felt compelled to dogmatize the Assumption in recognition of the belief of the faithful for the last 1000 years. Jung, in a letter to Upton Sinclair, commented on this, saying:

Boldly breaking through the sacrosanct rule about the definability of a new dogmatic truth, viz., that the said truth is only definibilis inasmuch as it was believed and taught in apostolic times, explicite or implicate, the pope has declared the Assumptio Mariae a dogma of the Christian creed. The justification he relies on is the pious belief of the masses for more than 1000 years, which he considers sufficient proof of the work of the Holy Ghost. Obviously the “pious belief” of the masses

¹⁴⁷ C.G. Jung, Letters, vol. 2, 315-316.

continues the process of projection, i.e., of transformation of human situations into myth.¹⁴⁸

Jung considered this event to be the most important religious event in the last 400 years because it introduces the feminine into the Godhead, making what was previously a trinity comprising only masculine images of father, son, and holy ghost, a quaternity.¹⁴⁹ Jung said:

If the Assumption means anything, it means a spiritual fact which can be formulated as the integration of the female principle into the Christian conception of the Godhead. This is certainly the most important religious development for 400 years.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ C.G. Jung, Letters, vol. 2, 206.

¹⁴⁹ In a personal communication, Father Hilary Martin pointed out that Jung’s idea of the quaternity is much more significant than the inclusion of the feminine into the Godhead, because the Holy Spirit is, also, feminine. Jung has acknowledged the relationship of the feminine Sophia and Sapientia to the Holy Ghost, especially in alchemy. He said, “In alchemy, the Holy Ghost and Sapientia are more or less identical...” (C.G. Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, CW 14, par. 432.) And in *Psychology and Alchemy*, par.466, he said, “The sapientia auctoris is, in patristic usage, the wisdom of the Holy Ghost.” Both of these statements address a feminine aspect of the Holy Ghost, but the Holy Ghost remains masculine. The feminine aspect is more of an anima figure.

¹⁵⁰ C.G. Jung, Letters, vol. 1, 567.

The inclusion of the feminine into the God-image is of momentous significance because it brings the polar opposites together again within one God. The split has been healed and God has become whole, encompassing now the creation in its entirety. The dark side has been redeemed in its reclamation by God and thus this event becomes an important marker for the third dispensation. God has become ready to incorporate and tame His shadow, bringing Himself as a *complexio oppositorum* into our consciousness, which is the task of this dispensation. Edinger says:

This announcement of the Assumption of Mary bodily into heaven is the latest event in the process of the transformation of the God-image. The God-image has now been transformed from a Trinity into a quaternity. With the addition of the feminine and corporeal aspects of existence, together with all the dark qualities that belong to flesh, the God-image now has been completed so that it contains the complete range of opposites—male/female, spirit/earth, good/evil.¹⁵¹

¹⁵¹ Edward Edinger, *Transformation of The God-Image*, 130.

Mary is the incarnation of Sophia, the Goddess of Wisdom. With the Assumption of Mary into the

Godhead, wisdom has also been incorporated. We now have been given the opportunity to partake of the wisdom of God, as His wisdom now will begin to manifest itself into Western Consciousness. The first two dispensations were concerned with our relationship to God. The third dispensation is concerned with our knowledge of God as He incarnates Himself in empirical man. Lawrence Jaffe said:

Sophia (Wisdom) is God 's feminine counterpart who was forgotten during the Hebrew and Christian dispensations and is now, in the Psychological dispensation, destined to reappear.¹⁵²
The Bridge to the East

The Assumption of Sophia as Mary into the Godhead brings our God-image much closer to that of the East, wherein all of the opposites are contained in God, (éçvara). In India, every God has a corresponding Goddess. And every God and Goddess embodies a light and a dark side. The Eastern Godimage is, as is now the Western one, inclusive of the feminine, embracing all polar opposites.

¹⁵² Lawrence Jaffe, *Liberating the Heart*, 136.

In the Eastern God-image, God is not dissociated from His omniscience. Unlike the Western Yahweh of the Jungian myth, God's wisdom is not hidden from Himself. He does not require a human being in order to become Self-conscious and aware of His own omniscience. He is already united with Sophia. It is the human being, not God, who is in need of liberation.

In the West, the divine drama unfolds and develops through time. In the East, God (éçvara) contains all time within Himself and expresses Himself through infinitely repeating cycles of creation, existence, and dissolution. Jung said:

Christianity has envisaged the religious problem as a sequence of dramatic events, whereas the East hold a thoroughly static view, i.e., a cyclic view. The thought of evolution is Christian and—as I think—in a way a better truth to express the dynamic aspect of the Deity, although the eternal immovability also forms an important aspect of the Deity (in Aristotle and in the old scholastic philosophy).¹⁵³

¹⁵³ C.G. Jung, *Letters*, vol. 2, 315.

The Western God-image, during the Jewish and Christian dispensations had very little in common with the Eastern God-image. Now, we seem to be moving toward the East, perhaps eventually to meet it. We can see the beginnings of this process manifest in the tremendous interest toward Eastern religions which has been developing in the West particularly since the Assumption. Jung was aware of this movement. His concern, as we will see, was that we don't imitate the East, but discover its truth within our own psyches and within our own myth.

CHAPTER 3

THE VEDANTIC VISION AND JUNG

Jung, Vedanta, and the East

T

he myth which we live by gives us our relationship to God and to ultimate reality. Our God-image, in order for it to be a God-image, must resonate in us, ringing of a truth which can satisfy the longings of our soul. Our myth should provide us with an opportunity for wholeness and purpose, and with meaningful interactions at our deepest level of being. Jung sought for such a meaningful interaction with our Western God-image.

The Western God-image is dynamic and thus in a process of continual transformation, which process will continue until the end of time, its source of origin, God, Himself, remaining unknowable. Our task in the West, then, is to respond to the God-image as it manifests in our psyche and to fulfill whatever task it is imposing upon us.

Our task, now, in the Psychological dispensation, is to come into relation with God on a deeper more personal level which entails not only bringing God as a *complexio oppositorum* into consciousness, but also in gaining an experiential wisdom of God as He manifests Himself in our psyche. No longer can God remain as a concretized deity to be worshipped as an external being in the creation. He must now be found in our own soul.

Coming into a full relationship with God as He manifests Himself in the psyche is a task to which Jung was completely devoted. True to his understanding of the epistemological limits placed upon our human means of knowledge, Jung did not conceive of knowing God as He is in His own being, but rather, only as He presents Himself to each individual psyche, and, collectively, to the world. Such presentations are, of course, subject to human interpretation which comprise our philosophies and theologies. Jung tried to stay away from theological or metaphysical interpretations of the God-image, which might imply knowledge of a transcendent God and he tried to confine himself to the God of his personal experience. Edinger writes that:

Shortly before his death in 1961, Jung was asked by an interviewer about his idea of God. He replied, “To this day God is the name by which I designate all things which cross my willful path violently and recklessly, all things which upset my subjective views, plans and intentions and change the course of my life for better or worse.”¹⁵⁴

Jung experienced God in the external world as well as in the internal world. If the presence of God is experienced in external phenomena, then, it is hard not to cross the metaphysical line. A force that affects one’s outer experience must cross over from one’s inner subjective reality into external objective reality. Jung quietly acknowledged this in his work on synchronicity, but the nature of that God always remained epistemologically unknowable.

Jung seemed resigned to accept the divine mystery of God and His ultimate unknowability. The acceptance of one’s requisite ignorance of God requires in the end, the admission that one does not and cannot really know the meaning and purpose of life. This was a cross that Jung accepted as part of the human condition. So many times near the end of his life, he said that: he did not know the meaning of life. In a conversation with Mary Crile, she recounted Jung saying:

¹⁵⁴ Good Housekeeping magazine, December 1961. Edwer Edinger, *The Creation of Consciousness*, 1984, 68.

“ I don’t know the meaning of life.” As he said this, I felt that, even for Jung, who more than anyone in our day saw life steadily and saw it whole, there still remained an unsolved mystery and that his “pistis”, translated from the Greek as “faith” but defined by him as “loyalty to an experience,” made him content that this should be so.¹⁵⁵

In a self evaluation, Jung said:

I am astonished, disappointed, pleased with myself. I am distressed, depressed, rapturous. I am all these things at once, and cannot add up the sum. I am incapable of determining ultimate worth or worthlessness; I have no judgment about myself and my life. There is nothing I am quite sure about. I have no definite convictions—not about anything, really. I know only that I was born and exist, and it seems to me that I have been carried along. I exist on the foundation of something I do not know. In spite of all uncertainties, I feel a solidity underlying all existence and a continuity in my mode of being.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁵ Ferne Jensen, ed. C.G. Jung, Emma Jung and Tony Wolff: *A Collection of Remembrances*, 116.

¹⁵⁶ C.G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, 358.

And,

When Lao-tzu says: “All are clear, I alone am clouded,” he is expressing what I now feel in advanced old age. Lao-tzu is the example of a man with superior insight who has seen and experienced worth and worthlessness, and who at the end of his life desires to return into his own being, into the eternal unknowable meaning.¹⁵⁷

The essential nature of God, “the solidity underlying all existence,” which Jung intuited but did not know, is the subject matter of Advaita Vedanta. Jung’s understanding of the Western God-image was rooted in his immediate experience of the psyche. The knowledge held in Advaita Vedanta is, also, rooted in the immediate experience of the psyche. Vedanta is a teaching methodology which claims to reveal, directly and immediately, the substratum of the psyche, that is, the innermost nature of the Self (ātma)¹⁵⁸ which is identical with God. Further, it deals with the

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 359.

¹⁵⁸ The Vedantic Self (ātman) is limitless non-dual consciousness/ existence/fullness, and is the underlying substratum/truth of the creation. The Vedantic Self is to the creation as the rope is to the projected snake, or as the clay is to the pot. This concept of Self is significantly different from the Jungian concept of Self. Please refer back to footnote 17.

relationship of the Self to both the inner and outer arenas of empirical experience.

The vision of Vedanta is missing from Jung's interpretation of the Western God-image. As we will see, the Vedantic Self, would alter, in a benign way, Jung's vision of God as a complexio oppositorum. The consciousness and sense of "I" which Jung attributed solely to the ego is, in Vedanta, the substratum of the creation and the Self of God. The affective nature of the Self is fullness or love. Thus, the Vedantic Self is the source of one's Selfexperience of existing, knowing, and loving, in the form of "I am," "I am conscious," and "I am happy." Jung did not know the nature and source of these central Self-experiences, and thus he was unable to differentiate them from the images and affects of the psyche.

Jung was familiar with the Upaniñads, however, and so, these ideas were not entirely unknown to him. Dr. Joseph Henderson, a Jungian analyst who was trained by Jung, told me in a personal communication, that Jung's use of the word "Self" has its roots in Vedanta. He said, "Jung first talks of the Self in Psychological Types, CW 6, and he uses the term in relation to the Hindu concepts of ātman and Brahman."¹⁵⁹ And in his book, *Shadow and Self*, Dr. Henderson related a discussion he had had with his publishers concerning whether to use a Capital "S" for the Self. Dr. Henderson stated his preference for doing so, saying, "Its metaphysical origin in the Hindu imagery of brahman and ātmā is too deeply rooted for me to forget that and prefer a more intellectual theory. So I am still in favor of the capital S..."¹⁶⁰

The Vedantic Myth

Please teach me that which you see as other than the desirable means and ends and undesirable means and ends, and which is other than past and future [other than things of the past, present, and future].¹⁶¹

According to the vision of Vedanta, before, during, and after the creation, the Self alone is. There is no second thing. The Self is infinite non-dual existence,

¹⁵⁹ Personal communication with Dr. Henderson, September 30, 1992. Please see C.G. Jung, *Psychological Types*, CW 6, 195-220, where Jung discusses many of his concepts in relation to Hindu imagery and philosophy.

¹⁶⁰ Joseph L. Henderson, *Shadow and Self: Selected Papers in Analytical Psychology* (Illinois: Chiron Publications, 1990), 16.

¹⁶¹ Kaōhopaniñad, I.ii. 14, translated by Swami Dayananda Saraswati in a personal communication.

consciousness, and fullness.¹⁶² The creation, like a dream, is born from, is sustained by, and resolves into the beginningless and changeless Self, which is its substratum and content. God is the Self plus māyā, an apparent material which projects the creation like a dream. The subtle creation, the total psyche, is the mind of God. The physical creation is the body of God. The entire creation, subtle and physical, has only the Self for its substance. The Self is the "I" of the creation, just as it is the "I" of the individual egos (jēvas). The individual egos are as beginningless as the creation and are infinite in number. They transmigrate from beginningless time, taking birth after birth, the quality of which is dependent on their previous actions (karmas). The continuing cycle of birth and death is called the wheel of saāsāra or transmigratory existence. One cannot get off this wheel until one gains Selfknowledge, whereby one recognizes the true nature of one's Self to be identical with the Self of God, the substratum of the creation. An often quoted verse within the Vedantic tradition states:

¹⁶² The Self (ātmā) is defined as sat-cit-ānanda, which can be translated as existence-consciousness-fullness. The word, "fullness," (ānanda) is meant to convey a sense of limitlessness and wholeness, which is experienced in the mind as love. In the literature, ānanda is often translated as "bliss," but this word gives one the sense of an ecstatic experience, which is misleading.

I will tell you in half a verse what crores of books have said: the infinite Self (brahman) is real, the creation is apparent, the individual Self (jēva) is the infinite Self (brahman). They are not different.¹⁶³

The Self of God is the Self of the individual. But the mind, reflecting the Self, identifies with the

Self and in this way the Self is thought to possess the limitations of the body and mind. The body and mind, on the other hand, gain the reality of the Self. The lack of differentiation between the Self, the individual, and God is the cause of our pain. We cannot accept our lack of wholeness because we are in truth whole. To gain back what we have lost, the lost treasure, is to gain knowledge of the Self, which is hidden in the one who seeks it. This realization frees one from the limitations of time, space, and causality, as one discovers one's true nature to be limitless existence, consciousness and love (ānanda or fullness). This knowledge is liberation and puts an end to transmigratory existence.

¹⁶³ ṣlokārdhena pravakñyāmi yaduktaā granthakoṣibhiù | brahmasatyā jaganmithyā jévo brahmaiva nāparaù || This verse has been passed down orally and I do not know its source, but it was taught to me by Swami Dayananda Saraswati. It is my translation.

The Vedantic myth differs from the Jungian myth in that there is a point of completion, or a winning of the game, which is not true in Jung's conception. For Jung, the process of individuation is an ongoing process which is never completed. There is no final attainment of wholeness or completion and this is rightly so, because the process of individuation deals with making unconscious elements conscious, thereby incrementally increasing one's consciousness throughout life. Since both the physical and unconscious realms are infinite in nature, there is no possibility of integrating an infinite number of unconscious elements into consciousness, even if one had infinite time to do so, as one never reaches the end of that which is infinite. Thus, complete individuation or wholeness can never be achieved.

The Vedantin would look at Jung's process of individuation differently, in reference to the meaning of life. The nature of the Self revealed in the Upaniṣads is limitless, non-dual, and whole. Liberation is knowledge of this Self which equates to the attainment of wholeness, the apparent lack of wholeness being due only to Self-ignorance. The Vedantin is in complete agreement with Jung that wholeness can never be accomplished through an increase in consciousness, as the acquisition of infinite bits of knowledge is endless. But Self-knowledge is not an accumulation of consciousness, nor is it an integration of unconscious material into consciousness. It is the recognition or differentiation of one's own nature which has been superimposed on both conscious and unconscious contents. Self-knowledge is the recognition and differentiation of an already existent wholeness which is both transcendent and imminent to all of one's perceptions. The experience of wholeness is the experience of object-free love.

An understanding of the nature and source of love is missing from Jung's vision. Love was a mystery to him, though he did not underestimate its central importance to human life, nor its divinity. In his autobiography, Jung said:

I sometimes feel that Paul's words—"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love"—might well be the first condition of all cognition and the quintessence of divinity itself. Whatever the learned interpretation may be of the sentence "God is love," the words affirm the complexio oppositorum of the Godhead. In my medical experience as well as in my own life I have again and again been faced with the mystery of love, and have never been able to explain what it is. Like Job, I had to "lay my hand on my mouth. I have spoken once, and I will not answer." (Job 40:4f.) Here is the greatest and smallest, the remotest and nearest, the highest and lowest, and we cannot discuss one side of it without also discussing the other. No language is adequate to this paradox. Whatever one can say, no words express the whole. To speak of partial aspects is always too much or too little, for only the whole is meaningful. Love "bears all things" and "endures all things" (1 Cor. 13:7). These words say all there is to be said; nothing can be added to them. For we are in the deepest sense the victims and the instruments of cosmogonic "love." I put the word in quotation marks to indicate that I do not use it in its connotations of desiring, preferring, favoring, wishing, and similar

feelings, but as something superior to the individual, a unified and undivided whole. Being a part, man cannot grasp the whole. He is at its mercy. He may assent to it, or rebel against it; but he is always caught up by it and enclosed within it. He is dependent upon it and is sustained by it. Love is his light and his darkness, whose end he cannot see. 'Love ceases not'—whether he speaks with the 'tongues of angels,' or with scientific exactitude traces the life of the cell down to its uttermost source. Man can try to name love, showering upon it all the names at his command, and still he will involve himself in endless self-deceptions. If he possess a grain of wisdom, he will lay down his arms and name the unknown by the more unknown, *ignotum per ignotius*—that is, by the name of God. That is a confession of his subjection, his imperfection, and his dependence; but at the same time a testimony to his freedom to choose between truth and error.¹⁶⁴

The experiential discovery of love as the nature of one's innermost being, the Vedantic Self, would complete the individuation process. A human being's sense of completion lies in his or her ultimate union with love—being love, being loved, and loving. Scriptures around the world acknowledge love as the cornerstone of one's well-being, saintliness, or liberation, and saints of all religions speak of love as union with God. It is the "finding of the lost treasure"—that element whose acquisition completes the human quest.

¹⁶⁴ C.G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, 1961, 354.

Jung's conception of love was embedded in the polar opposites of God as a *complexio oppositorum*. Therefore, in his vision, there is no absolute love, but only relative love. This is the tragedy of Jung's vision. He, himself, expresses the shock of such a belief in the following statement:

From a God who is a loving father, who is actually Love itself, one would expect understanding and forgiveness. So it comes as a nasty shock when this supremely good God only allows the purchase of such an act of grace through a human sacrifice, and what is worse, through the killing of his own son. Christ apparently overlooked this anticlimax: at any rate all succeeding centuries have accepted it without opposition. One should keep before one's eyes the strange fact that the god of goodness is so unforgiving that he can only be appeased by a human sacrifice! This is an insufferable incongruity which modern man can no longer swallow, for he must be blind if he does not see the glaring light it throws on the divine character, giving the lie to all talk about love and the *Summum Bonum*.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁵ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, par. 690.

Self-knowledge solves the riddle of life in that one experientially achieves the fullness or wholeness that he or she has been seeking and also understands the relation of God, soul, and creation to each other and to the Self. According to the tradition of Vedanta, the urge to reclaim one's wholeness, to reunite with one's origins, to become full, is an innate and inborn desire which is finally fulfilled with Self-knowledge. Until that time, the seeker searches the world for the treasure of the Self, facing obstruction after obstruction, never able to reach the horizon of completeness for which he or she is searching. At some point, the seeker turns inward to God and prays for help, realizing that he or she is caught in an insoluble problem, for the world does not contain what is sought.

At this point, when both the desire for completion and the recognition that completion cannot be attained in the world have become acute enough, the tradition holds that God will unite the seeker with a teacher (guru) who will impart Self-knowledge to him or her in accordance with the Upaniṣadic teaching tradition which has been handed down from teacher to student from beginningless time.¹⁶⁶ The Bhagavadgētā, as well

¹⁶⁶ For an interesting discussion on the eternity of the Vedas, please read Anantanand Rambachan, *Accomplishing the Accomplished: The Vedas as a Source of Valid Knowledge in Ćaikara* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1991) 33-37. as many other Vedantic texts, traces the teaching lineage back to God:

The Lord said:

I revealed this perennially eternal knowledge to Vivasvān [the head of the Solar clan]; Vivasvān, in turn, taught Manu [his son]; and Manu taught Ikñvāku [his son].¹⁶⁷

Another often quoted verse begins the lineage of teaching (guruĉiņyaparamparā) with the Lord and carries it up to our own teachers:

I salute the lineage of teachers, beginning with Sadāĉiva, with ĉaikarācārya in the middle, and up to my teacher.¹⁶⁸

The knowledge contained in the Upaniñads deals with the nature and realm of those things which fall under the scope of the Jungian ‘unconscious.’ According to Vedanta, the nature of the Self and God, existing outside of the sphere of our human means of knowledge, cannot be known through our own efforts,

¹⁶⁷ Bhagavadgētā, 4:1, translated by Swami Dayananda Saraswati in a personal communication.

¹⁶⁸ sadāĉivasamārambhāā ĉankarācāryamadhyamām |
asmadācāryaparyantāā vande guruparamaparām || This verse has been passed down orally within the Vedantic tradition. It was taught to me by Swami Dayananda Saraswati. It is my translation.

but rather must be revealed to us by God alone. This idea is, perhaps, an extension of what Jung means by God incarnating in us. Honoring the natural urge of the (Jungian) Self to consciously express itself is what Jung found to be our primary task in life and the work which makes life meaningful. And if there is a God, why should He not make Himself known to the human being? It would be the natural other half of the equation. The human being seeks to return to his or her origins and God seeks to become manifest in the human being.

Vedanta postulates itself as a revealed means of knowledge (pramāēa) for knowing the Self. Its teaching methodology involves the discriminative analysis of both the contents of the psyche and of sense perceptions, in order to arrive at the truth of both. The knowledge is not removed from one’s innermost experience. Rather it differentiates aspects of one’s experience which had heretofore been experienced in an undifferentiated form. As we will see, the Vedantic vision does not require one to “believe” in metaphysical postulates. Rather, it clarifies one’s experience with a profound simplicity which, if properly understood, cannot be negated.

Jung seems to have been totally unaware of the existence of the Vedantic teaching methodology, and even if exposed to it, he may not have been psychologically prepared to incorporate it into his own psychology. Through some twist of fate, his psyche seemed to guardedly keep him away from the depths of the East. He said:

I had searching talks with S. Subramaniam Iyer, the guru of the maharajah of Mysore, whose guest I was for some time; also with many others, whose names unfortunately have escaped me. On the other hand, I studiously avoided all so-called “holy men.” I did so because I had to make do with my own truth, not accept from others what I could not attain on my own. I would have felt it as a theft had I attempted to learn from the holy men and to accept their truth for myself. Neither in Europe can I make any borrowing from the East, but must shape my life out of myself—out of what my inner being tells me, or what nature brings to me.¹⁶⁹

I fantasize that the Gods wanted Jung to stay away from the wisdom of the East in order that he might

¹⁶⁹ C.G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, 275.

develop a psychology that could be used as a Western means to prepare the mind of a modern day

student for a knowledge waiting to be given. Jung was keenly aware of the problems that a modern person would face in his or her attempt to gain the knowledge of the East and commented on these problems extensively in several of his works, most of which are found in Volume 11 of the Collected Works. Jung's concerns are not opposed in any way to the vision and teaching methodology of Vedanta. Vedanta, itself, asserts that only an emotionally mature person can understand its vision. In Jungian terms, only a person who has achieved a relatively high degree of individuation would be qualified to gain the Self-knowledge revealed by the Upaniṣads.

On the other hand, an emotionally immature person would not be considered a qualified student for this knowledge. A person whose individuation process has been thwarted has much of his or her personality repressed. Such a person will constantly be a victim to those repressed aspects until they have been assimilated into consciousness. The Vedantic teaching methodology does not release a person from alienated unconscious material. Rather, it assumes that the student has a well-balanced and integrated psyche as one of its qualifications. Thus the great importance of Jung's work for the modern student, for whom such integration is not a given.

The teaching methodology of Vedanta directs the mind of the student toward realities which are logically valid and experientially verifiable once seen. Its purpose is to directly and immediately reveal the nature of the Self, the non-objectifiable subject, and its relation to the world, God, and individual. The Self, though ever present, can never be an object of sense perception nor of any other empirical means of knowledge, because, by nature, it is always the subject. Therefore, a teaching methodology which acts as a means of knowledge is necessary to differentiate the Self from the objects of experience with which it has been confused, and to reveal its true nature.

Self-knowledge is gained by the student at the time of teaching, if the means of knowledge (the teaching methodology) is properly handled and if the mind of the student is properly prepared to receive the knowledge. The realization of this vision is called liberation, because the student recognizes the true nature of his or her Self to be limitless, timeless, changeless, one with God, and the sole substance of the creation. The vision of Vedanta, is, in fact, that there is, in reality, nothing other than the Self. This being so, the Self certainly does not need to be liberated. The sense of bondage or limitation is, therefore, a problem of Self-ignorance, the solution for which lies only in Self-knowledge, which involves the differentiation of the Self from the world of one's experience. Once differentiated, the Self, which is present as the one constant in all experience, remains self-evident as the changeless conscious substratum of the psyche and of the world.

The Vedantic Vision of the Self

The Self, as revealed in Vedanta, is an undifferentiated aspect of the Jungian Self. The Vedantic Self is pure consciousness, and as consciousness, is Self-luminous or Self-revealing. This means that it does not require a second consciousness to know itself, just as the sun does not require another luminary to light it. Jung did not understand the relevance of pure consciousness to the individual because the relationship of pure consciousness to the ego as a knower was unclear to him. He said:

To us, consciousness is inconceivable without an ego; it is equated with the relation of contents to an ego. If there is no ego there is nobody to be conscious of anything. The ego is therefore indispensable to the conscious process. The Eastern mind, however, has no difficulty in conceiving of a consciousness without an ego. Consciousness is deemed capable of transcending its ego condition; indeed, in its "higher" forms, the ego disappears altogether. Such an ego-less mental condition can only be unconscious to us, for the simple reason that there would be nobody to witness it. I do not doubt the existence of mental states transcending consciousness. But they lose their consciousness to exactly the same degree that they transcend consciousness. I cannot imagine a conscious mental state

that does not relate to a subject, that is, to an ego. The ego may be depotentiated—divested, for instance, of its awareness of the body—but so long as there is awareness of something, there must be somebody who is aware. The unconscious, however, is a mental condition of which no ego is aware. It is only by indirect means that we eventually become conscious of the existence of an unconscious.”¹⁷⁰

¹⁷⁰ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, par. 774.

And also,

It is quite evident that the ego-complex is at the root of all complexes, since without an ego complexes couldn't be experienced at all. If you eradicate the ego completely, there is nobody left that would consciously experience. Too much ego always leads to a state of conflict, therefore it ought to be abolished. But it is the same thing as with the pairs of opposites; if you abolish the ego altogether, then you create unconsciousness. One assumes however that there is a consciousness without ego, a sort of consciousness of the ātman. I'm afraid this supreme consciousness is at least not one we could possess. Inasmuch as it exists, we do not exist.”¹⁷¹

The teaching methodology of Vedanta guides the student step by step to a recognition of one's innermost Self as pure consciousness, the very consciousness which Jung felt we could not possess. According to Vedanta, we do not possess consciousness, we are consciousness. The Self is the content of the word “I”, that Self-referent which

¹⁷¹ C.G. Jung, *Letters*, vol. 1, 247.

we refer to in such simple statements as “I am.” Though the Self is limitless and, therefore, must in reality be unembodied, it is natural for a person to attribute the nature of the body, mind, and sense organs to the Self and vice versa. Just as a red hot iron ball can be ignorantly perceived as one entity, similarly, the Self can be perceived as a body/mind/sense organs composite (kāryakāraēśaighāta). Upon Vedantic inquiry, however, this coalescence is found to be a mutual superimposition (anyonyādhyāsa) brought about by Self-ignorance. Čaikara, in the Adhyāsabhāñya of the Brahmasūtras states that:

...owing to an absence of discrimination between these attributes, as also between substances, which are absolutely disparate, there continues a natural human behavior based on self-identification in the form of ‘I am this’ or ‘This is mine.’ This behavior has for its material cause an unreal nescience and man resorts to it by mixing up reality with unreality as a result of superimposing the things themselves or their attributes on each other.¹⁷²

¹⁷² Čaikara, *The Brahmasūtrabhāñya of čaikarācāryatrans.* Swami Gambirananda. (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1972), 1.

Self-ignorance results in mutual superimposition, and thus is responsible for the illusion of a limited Self. The ascription of an object or its attributes to the Self-experience of existence and consciousness superimposes the limitations of that object upon the Self. Conversely, the ascription of existence or consciousness to an object or its attributes superimposes this Self-experience on to the object and thereby gives the object an undeserved reality. The reason for such a mistake is Self-ignorance.

...the idea of embodiedness is a result of false nescience. Unless it be through the false ignorance of identifying the Self with the body, there can be no embodiedness for the Self.¹⁷³

And,

Since the Self, as conditioned by various limiting adjuncts, is possessed of opposite qualities and appears variously like a prism (vičvarūpa) or a philosopher's stone(cintāmaēi), therefore it is only by a wise man of fine intellect, like us, that this Self can be known.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁴ Çaikara “Kaõhopaniñad,” in *Eight Upaniñads, with the Commentary of Çankarãcãrya*, vol. 1, trans. Swami Gambirananda. (Mangalore: The Sharada Press, 1973), 147.

Mutual superimposition, in general, has ignorance for its cause. For example, if upon seeing the red hot iron ball mentioned earlier, I ascribe the qualities of roundness and weight to the fire and redness and hotness to the iron ball, I have mutually superimposed the nature and qualities of the one upon the other. Such a superimposition cannot occur without ignorance of the objects involved. In order to break through this ignorance-based superimposition I must know each object as it is in and of itself.

The nature of the Self, commonly referred to by the words I, me, and mine, is not known in and of itself. Only the Self-experience of being conscious and existent is known. As Çaikara says, “everyone feels that his Self exists, and he never feels, ‘I do not exist’ . Had there been no general recognition of the existence of the Self, everyone would have felt, ‘I do not exist.’ ”¹⁷⁵ However, the specific nature of that existence and consciousness is unknown. The Self, being the nonobjectifiable ground of experience, is not available for ordinary means of knowledge such as perception and inference, and, therefore, though intimately experienced as one’s Self, remains unknown in and of

¹⁷⁵ Çaikara, *The Brahmasũtra Bhãñya of Çankarãcãrya*, trans. Swami

itself. In the *Bãhadãraeyakopaniñad*, Yãjñavalkya, in teaching Uñasta, explains why the Self cannot be an object of knowledge:

You cannot see that which is the witness of vision; you cannot hear that which is the hearer of hearing; you cannot think that which is the thinker of thought; you cannot know that which is the knower of knowledge. This is your self that is within all; everything else is but perishable.¹⁷⁶

Because the Self as the subject can never be an object, we are precluded from knowing it through the usual knower/known or subject/object relationship, wherein the subject utilizes a means of knowledge to know the object. The only knowledge we can have of the subject, therefore, without access to an appropriate means of knowledge, is that knowledge which is selfevident or self-luminous. We can be aware of ourselves as conscious not because we can know consciousness as an object, but because by its nature the Self is consciousness. We can know ourselves as existent not

¹⁷⁶ Çaikara, *The Bãhadãraeyakopaniñad with the Commentary of Çankarãcãrya*, trans. Swami Madhavananda. (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1965), III.4.2.

because we can objectify existence, but because the “beingness” of that which exists is self-evident.

The Self is not absolutely beyond apprehension, because It is apprehended as the content of the concept “I”; and because the Self, opposed to the non-Self, is well known in the world as an immediately perceived (i.e. self-revealing) entity.¹⁷⁷

We have Self-experience without Self-knowledge and this condition forms the basis of mutual superimposition. All external and internal perceptions come and go within the existence and consciousness of the Self and, therefore, cannot be the Self. Yet, the existence and consciousness of the Self is attributed to the objects of perception and vice-versa. To illustrate, the statement, “The pot exists.” combines two experiences. The pot is an object of perception, the experience of its existence is not. The experience of existence belongs only to the Self. But, by this mutual superimposition, the pot gains the attribute of existence, and existence becomes qualified by the name, form, and finitude of the pot. Similarly, in the statement, “I know my body,” or “I am conscious of

¹⁷⁷ Çaikara, *The Brahmasũtrabhãñya of Çaikarãcãrya*, trans. Swami

my body, ” the experience of consciousness belongs to the Self, whereas the body is an object of perception.¹⁷⁸ “Body-consciousness,” therefore, involves the combining of two experiences, the Self-

experience of consciousness and the sensory perception of body.

In the absence of discriminative analysis, the Self is naturally superimposed on limiting adjuncts such as the body, mind, and sense organs. But through a number of teaching methodologies, the student is brought to see the Self as the innermost subject, other than and different from those objects with which it had been previously identified. Such methodologies liberate the Self-experience of existence (I exist) and consciousness (I am conscious) from the changing and finite nature of the superimposed limiting adjuncts. By excluding from the nature of the conscious being all objects of consciousness, including those which I had previously identified with myself, I am left with the Self as an undifferentiated existent consciousness which is distinct from and, therefore, not qualified by the objects of consciousness. This being so, the

¹⁷⁸ Such a knowledge as “I know my body,” in which the Self is differentiated from the body is arrived at through the Vedantic teaching methodology known as *dāgdācyaviveka*, the discriminative analysis of seer and seen. Please refer to the section beginning on page 150 for further discussion of this methodology.

conscious entity must necessarily be only one, because the differentiating elements of the objective world do not belong to it. Thus, the Self is discovered to be limitless, free from time, space, and attribute.

Limitlessness, like existence and consciousness, is a Self-experience. It is the source for feelings of wellbeing, fullness, completeness, happiness, joy, and love. The manifestation of limitlessness in the mind (I am happy, full, complete), however, depends on the condition of the mind. This differs from the Self-experience of existence (I exist) and consciousness (I am conscious) which appears to be more continuous. Existence and consciousness are not covered or hidden by negative moods in the mind as is the Self-experience of fullness or love. An agitated mind, for example, does not reflect the fullness of the Self. However, that it exists or has consciousness is not in question. As long as I am alive and awake, existence and consciousness do not appear to wax and wane. Happiness however, comes and goes.

The moods of the mind are caused by the mind's qualitative nearness to the nature of the Self. When the mind is dull or agitated, it will feel pain and isolation because its condition does not mirror the Self. If the mind is still and relaxed, it feels pleasure, peace, and harmony, because its condition reflects and blends in with that of the Self. This gives a sense of well-being, centeredness, and non-isolation.

An analogy of three water buckets reflecting the sun is often used in Vedanta to illustrate the effect of mood changes on one's Self-experience of fullness or the lack thereof. Three buckets of water each reflect the sun. The first water bucket is muddy, the second agitated, the third still and clear. To the nondiscriminating water, the sun appears dull and muted in the first bucket, wavy and agitated in the second, and brilliant and true to its form in the third. The sun, however, is not affected or changed by the condition of the water. It is always the same, always brilliantly self-luminous. The changes belong only to the water, but the water has identified itself with the sun. This erroneous identification enhances the nature of the water, I suppose, by giving it luminosity, but it takes away from the nature of the sun, by attaching false limitations to it.

Following the water bucket analogy, if the Self/ sun has not been differentiated from the mind/water, then the Self will appear to change in accordance with the moods of mind. In reality, the Self, like the sun, illumines the mind's changing conditions. The mind superimposes both itself and its conditions onto the “I am” of the Self and can thereby make such statements as “I am depressed,” “I am agitated,” “I am elated,” “I am content,” and so forth. The most popular of the mental conditions are those which most truly reflect the nature of the Self (like the clear water bucket). In this condition

the mind feels complete and loved, freed from any sense of isolation. Because one does not know that the source of this experience is the Self, the person becomes dependent on creating situations which will produce this state of happiness.

The illusion of external sources of happiness creates the unreachable carrot on the stick. Because I do not know that the Self is the source of the happiness that I seek in life, whenever I experience happiness, I attribute it to the given situation at the time and then attach myself to that experience, whether it be a person, place, or thing. This phenomenon is the source of desire and frustration.

I desire what I think will make me happy. When a given desire is fulfilled, at that moment, the mind becomes still, like the clear water bucket. For a moment, it wants nothing. It is desireless, complete. In this state of non-agitation, the Self is clearly reflected in the mind and the person experiences happiness. The happiness, however, is not taken to be the nature of the Self, it is taken to be the result of the acquisition of the object. This being so, the experience of joy quickly vanishes as the mind starts to worry about protecting the object and maximizing the experience of joy. Almost immediately the mind will think of new sets of obstructions that can bar or inhibit this wonderful experience of happiness. This causes agitation in the mind, which like the muddy water bucket, mutes the reflection of the sun/Self, and causes the disappearance of the happy experience.

We search the world for experiences of happiness, fulfilling one desire after another, experiencing fleeting moments of joy as the desires are fulfilled, only to quickly lose them and suffer the ensuing sorrow. The very pursuit causes suffering in that it is responsible for the mental agitation that alienates the mind from the nature of the Self.

The nature of the Self is fullness which is the awareness/existence that illumines and gives its being to the mind. For the person who has gained Selfknowledge, the cause for mental agitation is eliminated as there is no distance between the Self and the mind to separate the mind from the fullness it seeks. The mind turns to the Self for its sense of completion and love rather than superimposing it on the world and then striving to attain it.

...having seen the reality in this way, one should become identified with Reality, have one's delight only in the Self, and not in anything external like one lacking in realization, who accepts the mind as the Self, and thinks the Self to be changing in accordance with the changes of the mind, or at times accepts the body etc. to be the Self and thinks, "I am now alienated from Reality that is the Self"; and when at times the mind becomes concentrated, who thinks himself to be united with Reality and in peace under the belief, "I am now identified with Reality". The knower of the Self should not be like that, because the nature of the Self is ever the same, and because it is impossible for anything to change its nature; and one should be for ever unwavering from Reality, under the conviction, "I am Brahman," that is to say, he should ever have the consciousness of Reality that is the Self, in accordance with such smṛti texts as (The enlightened man) views equally a dog or an outcast" (Bhagavadgētā, 5.18) "He sees who sees the supreme Lord existing equally in all beings." (Bhagavadgētā, 13.27)¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁹ Çaikara, "Mäëöukya Kārikā" in Eight Upaniñads, with the Commentary of çaikarācārya, vol. 2, trans. Swami Gambirananda (Mangalore: The Sharada Press, 1973), 266-277 (Commentary on verse 2.38).

To summarize, the Self is the ever present and changeless content of the word "I." Through the process of superimposition which we have discussed at length, the Self is erroneously identified with the body, mind, sense organs, and the objective creation. This lack of differentiation between the Self and the creation causes suffering, because it alienates the person from his or her true nature. When the Self has been discerned through a teaching methodology which reveals the Self to the student as the innermost subject, whose nature is limitless existence, awareness, and love, the student is freed from

the notions of limitation and sorrow that had once bound him or her. As we will see later, this limitless Self is revealed to be the Self of God. In order to understand this identity fully, we need to discuss the nature of God and the distinction between God and the Self. But, before embarking on that discussion, I would like to first relate the Vedantic Self to the Jungian Self.

The Jungian Self

The Self, revealed through the Vedanta, is not the Self that Jung had in mind when he used the term, but the consciousness/existence/fullness, which is the Vedantic Self, accounts for some of Jung's experiences which he attributed to his concept of the Self. One's experience can be accounted for in many different ways, depending on the model or grid that is being used to accommodate the experience. Jung's formulation of the Self, based on his empirical investigations, touches several metaphysical concepts that are integral to the Vedantic vision of reality.

Jung repeatedly referred to the inexplicable nature of the Self, and was very aware that it was beyond our empirical means of knowledge and thus would have to remain a mystery. In the following quote, Jung gives a lengthy description of the nature of the Self. I would like to break the quote into sections and give a Vedantic analysis of Jung's experience of the Self. Jung describes his concept of the Self as:

an actual, living something, poised between two world-pictures and their darkly discerned potencies. This 'something' is strange to us and yet so near, wholly ourselves and yet unknowable, a virtual centre of so mysterious a constitution that it can claim anything—kinship with beasts and gods, with crystals and with stars—without moving us to wonder, without even exciting our disapprobation. This 'something' claims all that and more, and having nothing in our hands that could fairly be opposed to these claims, it is surely wiser to listen to this voice.¹⁸⁰

The nature of the Vedantic Self is consciousness, but per se, not consciousness of something. Therefore, from its own standpoint, it is not a knower, but is rather the self-effulgent conscious principle of the knower. This 'something' is unknowable as an object, because as the content of the knower, it is not available for a subject/object relationship necessary for objectification. Yet, at the same time, the Self being consciousness per se, is Self-aware, but in a non-dual Self-effulgent way. The Self is the ultimate being or substrate substance of the creation, which includes the psyche, both conscious and unconscious. It enjoys most intimate kinship with everything as their being and essence. Jung continues:

I have called this centre the self. Intellectually the self is no more than a psychological concept, a construct that serves to express an unknowable essence which we cannot grasp as such, since by definition it transcends our powers of comprehension. It might equally well be called the 'God within us.' The

¹⁸⁰ C.G. Jung, *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*, CW. 7, par 398.

beginnings of our whole psychic life seems to be inextricably rooted in this point, and all our highest and ultimate purposes seem to be striving towards it. This paradox is unavoidable, as always, when we try to define something that lies beyond the bourn of our understanding..¹⁸¹

The Self is ever present as the center and substance of the psyche, but transcends our powers of comprehension because we have no means of knowledge with which to analyze it or know it objectively. We can only be it. From the standpoint of the psyche, it is "God within us," but, from the standpoint of the Self, the entire creation is within it. It is "God within us" as the very center of our psychic life and that toward which the entire life gravitates. This is because the nature of the Self provides the sense of wholeness, fullness, and completeness which the psyche continually searches to realize, always seeking a balance within itself so as to allow for the expression of that fullness within

the conscious mind.

The self could be characterized as a kind of compensation of the conflict between inside and outside. This formulation would not be unfitting, since the self has somewhat the character of a result, of a goal attained, something that has come to pass very gradually and is experienced with much travail. So too the self is our life's goal, for it is the completest expression of that fateful combination we call individuality, the full flowering not only of the single individual, but of the group, in which each adds his portion to the whole.¹⁸²

The Self is a compensation of the conflict between inside and outside because it is the underlying substratum of the psyche as a whole and thus it forms the unifying bridge between the inside and outside. The conscious mind can be likened to a mirror which reflects the Self as well as its object contents. A disrupted and highly unassimilated personal unconscious creates a pervasive and semi-conscious condition of stress in the mind, which produces a sense of alienation from the Self. It would be like looking at the reflection of your face in a mirror which is covered with a layer of dust. The reflection is barely visible. When the condition of the mind loses its capacity to reflect the Self fully, it feels lost and alienated.

As the mind assimilates the unconscious and develops a healthy relationship with it, the underlying stress and tension of the mind is reduced and the presence of the Self becomes more experiential. This phenomenon gives one the sense of a goal being reached, definitely gradually and with much travail, as the assimilation of the unconscious is a process that takes place in time.

Sensing the self as something irrational, as an indefinable existent, to which the ego is neither opposed nor subjected, but merely attached, and about which it revolves very much as the earth revolves round the sun—thus we come to the goal of individuation. I use the word 'sensing' in order to indicate the aperceptive character of the relation between ego and self. In this relation nothing is knowable, because we can say nothing about the contents of the self. The ego is the only content of the self that we do know. The individuated ego senses itself as the object of an unknown and supraordinate subject.¹⁸³

Without a means of knowledge, such as Vedanta, there is no way to know the nature of the Self, and yet the Self, being self-luminous awareness is not unknown. It is the consciousness and existence which is the conscious content of all experience, and yet, without the use of a means of knowledge, one is unable to say anything specific about the nature of consciousness and existence, and therefore, is unable to say anything specific about the Self. Even though without a means of knowledge one cannot speak with authority but can only conjecture, such postulates are necessary to account for one's inner experience. For instance, it is a fact that the object contents of the mind are known to me. Even the "I" thought is an object of knowledge. Also, though my experiences, moods, perceptions, negate each other, taking place sequentially, every experience, composed of both the knower-ego and known are themselves illumined by consciousness. Jung is describing this phenomena when he says: 'The individuated ego senses itself as the object of an unknown and supraordinate subject.' He is fully aware of the impossibility of knowing the Self without a proper means of knowledge, as he continues:

It seems to me that our psychological inquiry must come to a stop here, for the idea of a self is itself a transcendental postulate which, although justifiable psychologically, does not allow of scientific proof. This step beyond science is an unconditional requirement of the psychological development I have sought to depict, because without this postulate I could give no adequate formulation of the psychic processes that occur empirically. At the very least, therefore, the self can claim the value of an hypothesis analogous to that of the structure of the atom. And even though we

should once again be enmeshed in an image, it is none the less powerfully alive, and its interpretation quite exceeds my powers. I have no doubt at all that it is an image, but one in which we are contained.¹⁸⁴

I do not want to mislead the reader by my

commentary that I am in any way equating the Jungian concept of the Self with the Self of Vedanta. I am, rather, pointing to the Vedantic Self as an underlying substratum which is always factored into one's experience, albeit ignorantly. Jung did not have a clear understanding of the Vedantic Self to be able to differentiate it from the ego and phenomena which he attributed to the objective psyche.

Without an appropriate means of knowledge, the nature of the Vedantic Self, that ultimate nonobjectifiable ground of being, cannot be known. It can

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

only be experienced as the inexplicable sense of Self, of being and consciousness, that every person has. This sense of being pervades all experience and will naturally be identified with it unless a differentiation is made. This is the task of Vedanta: to differentiate the Self from the world of internal and external objectifiable experience and then to redefine one's experience in light of that new knowledge.

The Vedantic Self was not Understood by Jung

The Vedantic Self is not accounted for in the Jungian model of the psyche. Jung, in fact, had no use for such a Self, because he did not understand the relationship of pure consciousness to the ego.¹⁸⁵ Jung understood the Eastern concept of pure consciousness to be beyond the ego and transcendent to it; thus pure consciousness and the ego became two distinct entities, and he identified himself with the knowing ego. Pure consciousness then became a transcendent "mental condition"¹⁸⁶ beyond the ego consciousness,

¹⁸⁵ The Jungian use of the term, "ego," is equivalent to the Vedantic "conscious mind" (cidābhāsa). In Vedanta, the term, "ego," refers to a thought form which unites the non-dual Self with an object of perception, such as the body or mind, in the form of "I am the body," or "I am the mind." In Vedanta, the ego is, thus, a product of ignorance, brought about by the non-differentiation of the Self from the objects of experience, and has no essential reality.

¹⁸⁶ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, par. 774.

not available to the ego and thus not useful. For Jung, consciousness is something created or accumulated as the ego gathers knowledge or extends its boundaries. It is thus a product of a knower/known duality.

Jung did not venture into the essential nature of the knower, that is, of the ego, itself, which, according to the Vedantic vision, is pure consciousness. If the conscious ego is considered from its own standpoint, minus the objects of knowledge which it has accrued, we are left with the essential nature of the knower/ ego, which is consciousness itself, not consciousness of something. Knowership is dependent upon the presence of an object of knowledge. If objects are removed, so is knowership—it is a relative concept. The essential nature of the ego is the Vedantic Self. It is pure Self-luminous consciousness and consciousness does not require a second consciousness to reveal it, just as the sun does not require another luminary to light it. The consciousness of the Self is not in process. There is no accumulation nor diminution in the Self. It is constant, changeless, and eternal. Jung never grasped the significance of this, and, in fact, misunderstood it. He said:

The Eastern mind, however, has no difficulty in conceiving of a consciousness without an ego. Consciousness is deemed capable of transcending its ego condition; indeed, in it "higher" forms, the ego disappears altogether. Such an ego-less mental condition can only be unconscious to us, for the simple reason that there would be nobody to witness it.¹⁸⁷

Jung understood consciousness to be a “mental condition” which transcends the knower and thus moves out of the realm of the ego’s knowledge. Vedanta would explain the relationship of the Jungian ego to consciousness much differently. The Self is the only source of consciousness, and it is the substantial center of the ego, that is, it is the ego’s sense of “I.” Thus, the consciousness of the ego can never be transcended, being the ultimate ground and center of all experience. However, the ego can resolve into consciousness in meditative experiences. In this case, what is experienced is the ego\subject minus all perceptions or objectifications.¹⁸⁸ This mental state

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ The use of the word “experience” is problematic. One cannot experience one’s Self in the sense of a subject experiencing an object. However, the Self is Self-effulgent as consciousness. Just as the sun needs no other light to illumine it, the Self needs no other consciousness for its Self-experience. Therefore, the experience is non-dual, devoid of a subject/object or knower/known relationship. I use the word experience to convey the sense of immediate and direct knowledge of the Self.

creates a non-dual Self-experience of pure consciousness, the essence of one’s being. We will discuss this more fully in the next section.

The Vedantic Teaching Methodology

Self-knowledge is not gained through meditative experiences. An infinite, timeless, experience, profound and sacred as it may be, does not define itself in the scheme of things and thus the relationship of such a mystical experience to one’s Self, God, and creation remains unknown.¹⁸⁹ Jung, in his explorations of the psyche, was very aware of the difference between experience and knowledge. He continually made reference to the fact that he was describing experienced phenomena. What it was and from whence it came he did not know. He said:

Of the essence of things, of absolute being, we know nothing. But we experience various effects: from “outside” by way of the senses, from “inside” by way of fantasy. We would never think of asserting that the color “green” had an independent existence; similarly we ought never to imagine that a fantasy

¹⁸⁹ For an in-depth discussion on the incapacity of meditation to produce Self-knowledge, please read Anantanand Rambachan, *Accomplishing the Accomplished*, 1991, 108-116.

experience exists in and for itself, and is therefore to be taken quite literally. It is an expression, an appearance standing for something unknown but real.¹⁹⁰

Knowledge of ultimate reality does not lie within the field of perceptual reality. It is the substrate content of all name and form, and thus cannot be known through the perception of an image, whether of internal or external origin. This is an epistemological limitation which we cannot cross with our ordinary means of knowledge. Vedanta claims to be the bridge over this limitation. It defines itself as a revealed means of knowledge necessary for knowing that which cannot be otherwise known. The ultimate subject, the Self, cannot be objectified and, therefore, is not available for our ordinary means of knowledge, all of which depend on sense perception. Anantanand Rambachan, discussing Ćaikara’s justification of the Vedas (ŗruti) as a means of knowledge (pramāēa), says:

Ćaikara is...emphatic on the absolute inapplicability of all pramāēas, except ŗruti, to the knowledge of brahman. He is tireless in explaining the incompetence of sense perception in apprehending brahman. Ćaikara

¹⁹⁰ C.G. Jung, *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*, CW 7, par. 355.

refuses to accept that because brahman is an existent entity; like all such realities, it must be the object of other sources of valid knowledge. The senses are naturally capable of grasping and revealing their appropriate objects. Brahman, however, remains unapproachable through any of them because of its uniqueness. The organs can only grasp a differentiated object within their

range...Sound, sensation, form, taste, and scent are their respective spheres of functioning. Brahman, however, has neither sound, touch, form, taste, or smell. It is without qualities, (nirguṇa) and outside the domain of the sense organs. Brahman is limitless, and to become an object of sense knowledge is to be finite and delimited, to be one object among many objects. A brahman that is sense apprehended is, therefore, a contradiction.¹⁹¹

Vedanta is a means of knowledge for the immediate experiential knowledge of the Self and its relation to God and the universe. According to its tenets, this revelatory knowledge can withstand any amount

¹⁹¹ Anantanand Rambachan, *Accomplishing the Accomplished*, 1991, 41.

of logical analysis and is also not contradicted by one's experience. However, because the knowledge gained is outside of our epistemological limits, our own means of knowledge, as well as our logic and experience, can only substantiate the vision of Vedanta, they cannot produce it. The verification of Vedanta as a valid means of knowledge lies only in its use, because the knowledge it has to give cannot be gained elsewhere.

The Vedantic teaching methodology guides the mind of the student to a direct cognition of the Self. Although teaching styles are many and varied, and points of emphasis may differ, the knowledge to be conveyed remains the same. Some of the primary teaching methodologies used in Vedanta are summarized below and then expanded upon in the following four sections. The order in which they are listed represents a common sequence used in teaching Vedanta.

1. Discriminating the Seer from the Seen (dāḍḍācyaviveka). The Self, the subject, is differentiated from the experienced, objectified world which includes the individual's body, mind, and sense organs (kāryakāraṇasaṁghāta). A famous verse from an explanatory text, itself called Dāḍḍācyaviveka or Vākyaçuddha exemplifies this process of discrimination:

A form is seen; the seer is the eye. The eye is seen; the seer is, indeed, the mind. All thought forms [of the mind] are seen; the seer is the witness, alone, which is, itself, never seen.¹⁹²

This procedure removes from the conscious subject all that can be objectified and thereby separated from it. Existence, consciousness, and fullness (saccidānanda) are extracted from the world and given back to the Self, now freed from any of the limiting adjuncts (upādhis) with which it had previously been identified. The Self is discovered to be free from time and space and, therefore, changeless and limitless. It is existence, consciousness, and fullness.

2. The Apparent Nature of the World. Existence or reality is defined as that which cannot be negated in any of the three periods of time, past, present, and future (trikālābādhitasatyam). The world, existing within time, cannot have absolute existence for it is subject to change and negation. This reduces the world to an

¹⁹² Vākyaçuddha, in H.R. Bhagavat, *çréçāikarācāryaviracitaprakaraṇa granthaù: Minor Works of Sri çāikarācārya* (Poona: Oriental Press, 1952), v.1. Translated by Swami Dayananda Saraswati in a personal communication.
apparent reality (mithyā) dependent on the Self for its being.

3. The Nature of God. Because the Self is limitless, it is not confined or circumscribed by the individual. Therefore, the entire creation exists in and because of the Self. Therefore, not only the individual has a Self, the world also does. The Upaniñads reveal that the world is thus a conscious entity which we call God (éçvara).

4. The Non-dual Identity of the Individual and God. The Self from the standpoint of the individual (jéva) is called ātmā. The Self from the standpoint of God (éçvara) is called brahman. The Self (ātmā) of the individual, is revealed to be the Self of God (brahman) through one of the mahāvākya pramāṇas, such as "That thou art " (tattvamasi).¹⁹³ God, world, and individual become apparent

realities dependent on the Self for their being and reality becomes, therefore, non-dual (advaita).

The relationship between a wave, the ocean, and water is often used to illustrate not only the non-dual nature of reality, but also the use of the mahāvākya in

¹⁹³ The word “mahāvākya” literally means “great statement” and is the technical term given for a statement which reveals the identity between the individual Self (ātmā) and the infinite Self (brahman).

revealing it. The wave is not the ocean and is small and limited in its powers compared to the vast ocean in which it is included. However, the wave from the standpoint of water is identical with the ocean. In fact, water is the non-dual reality (paramārthikasatyam) of both of them. The ocean and the wave, are only apparent realities (mithyā) totally dependent upon the water for their existence. The teacher, using the mahāvākya, “That thou art,” reveals to the wave that the Self of the ocean, that is, the water, and the Self of the wave, again, the water, are identical, and that there is, in reality, only one water. Similarly, the individual, like the wave, is identical with God, the ocean, from the standpoint of the Self.

The Discriminative Analysis of the Seer and the Seen

The Vedantic teaching methodology involves an experientially based analysis which differentiates the subject from the object. By means of this analysis, the student finds that everything he or she had previously identified as the subject is, in fact, the object. Everyone accepts the perceived world to be obviously distinct from one’s Self. However, the physical body, the sense organs, the conscious mind or ego, and images from the psyche, I do identify with the Self, even though they are as much objects of my consciousness as are my not-Self perceptions.

If I exclude from the nature of the conscious being all objects of consciousness, including those which I had previously identified with myself, I am left with the Self as pure consciousness which is distinct from and, therefore, not qualified by the objects of consciousness. This being so, the conscious entity must necessarily be only one, because the differentiating elements of the objective world do not belong to it.

As mentioned earlier, pure consciousness as the nature of the Self was not a viable option for Jung. Without a means of knowledge, it is not possible to differentiate the Self from one’s experience. Such questions as, “Who is the one who is having the experience? or “Who is the knower of my thoughts, emotions, and images?” are unanswerable without a means of knowledge to know the knower. Jung said:

One cannot know something that is not distinct from oneself. Even when I say “I know myself,” an infinitesimal ego—the knowing “I”—is still distinct from “myself.” In this as it were atomic ego, which is completely ignored by the essentially non-dualist standpoint of the East, there nevertheless lies hidden the whole unabolished pluralistic universe and its unconquered reality.

The experience of the “at-one-ment” is one example of those “quick-knowing” realizations of the East, an intuition of what it would be like if one could exist and not exist at the same time. If I were a Moslem, I should maintain that the power of the All-Compassionate is infinite, and that He alone can make man to be and not to be at the same time. But for my part I cannot conceive of such a possibility. I therefore assume that, in this point, Eastern intuition has overreached itself.¹⁹⁴

Jung had to restrict his inquiry to the images which presented themselves to consciousness. He could not enquire into the nature of consciousness because of the epistemological limitation that “One cannot know something that is not distinct from oneself.”¹⁹⁵

Consciousness is always the subject which illumines the object. Thus it is, as though, behind the

¹⁹⁴ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, pars. 817-818.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

image or the backdrop of the image. Whether the experienced image is internal or external, it takes place within consciousness and consciousness has a subject/ object relationship with it. The ego, itself, is an object of consciousness. All images, whether of internal or external objects, including the “I” thought or the selfreflective thought, are illumined by consciousness and are objects in reference to consciousness. There is never a time when this is not so. However, we fall into a participation mystique in reference to the ego, mind, or psyche as well as with the external world. Jung has commented on the participation mystique, a term first used by Levy-Bruhl, in reference to our relationship with the external world, where the subject remains undifferentiated from the object. He says:

By a stroke of genius, Levy-Bruhl singled out what he called participation mystique as being the hall mark of primitive mentality. What he meant by it is simply the non-differentiation between subject and object, which is still so great among primitives that it cannot fail to strike our European consciousness very forcibly. When there is no consciousness of the difference between subject and object, an unconscious identity prevails. The unconscious is then projected into the object, and the object is introjected into the subject, becoming part of his psychology. Then plants and animals behave like human beings, human beings are at the same time animals, and everything is alive with ghosts and gods. Civilized man is naturally identified with his parents throughout his life, or with his affects and prejudices, and shamelessly accuses others of the things he will not see in himself. He too has a remnant of primitive unconsciousness, of non-differentiation between subject and object. Because of this, he is magically affected by all manner of people, things, and circumstances, he is beset by disturbing influences nearly as much as the primitive and therefore needs just as many apotropaic charms. He no longer works magic with medicine bags, amulets, and animal sacrifices, but with tranquilizers, neuroses, rationalism, cult of the will, etc.

But if the unconscious can be recognized as a co-determining factor along with consciousness, and if we can live in such a way that conscious and unconscious demands are taken into account as far as possible, then the centre of gravity of the total personality shifts its position. It is then no longer in the ego, which is merely the centre of consciousness, but in the hypothetical point between conscious and unconscious. This new centre might be called the self. If the transposition is successful, it does away with the participation mystique and results in a personality that suffers only in the lower storeys, as it were, but in the upper storeys is singularly detached from painful as well as from joyful happenings.¹⁹⁶

The participation mystique also takes place in reference to the ego, where we identify consciousness with the body, mind, sense organs, and “I” thought, even though all of them are as much objects of awareness as are internal and external “non-I” images. Consciousness can never be identified with that which it illumines and, therefore, cannot be defined by those objects, just as I cannot define the eye by the characteristics of something which it illumines. The subject is always distinct from the object. We can experiment with this fact in reference to consciousness

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., par. 66.

by watching our thought flow. Any given thought will come and go upon the stable substratum of consciousness. This is true even for thoughts with which I have identified via the participation mystique. Such thoughts also come and go, but consciousness remains constant.

Because consciousness is self-effulgent and is the one common denominator to all experience, it can be differentiated from the images which it illumines. But consciousness is the easiest of all things to miss, for it is hidden in the seeker who roams the inner and outer worlds for meaning and truth. It is the lost treasure of the psyche.

The participation mystique is broken when, through the application of the teaching methodology, the ego turns to face the Self, having turned away from all images and focused itself solely on the consciousness which illumines it. The mind then experiences a conjunctio with the Self, an experience of supreme bliss. This is the resolution of the mind into its source of being. For the moment, there is an experience of complete non-duality, as nothing is there to intervene between the mind and the Self. Once the mind has discerned or differentiated the conscious ground of being which illumines it, then with or without the image, the mind retains the immediate knowledge of the Self-effulgent consciousness. When this is so, no matter what images are being brought forth, no matter how intense the affects and their images are, the Self abides as a constant refuge, the experiential wholeness in which the entire spectrum of images have their being.

The Apparent Nature of the Creation

The differentiation of the Self from the creation establishes a non-dual Self, but does not establish non-duality between the Self and the Creation. If consciousness is separated from the creation, then the creation may enjoy an independent existence apart from consciousness, which results in duality. The reality of the creation, therefore, has to be analyzed.

If the creation enjoys its own independent existence, it is ontologically separate from the Self and a dual reality composed of the Self and the world exists. If, on the other hand, the creation is dependent for its being on the Self, then it has no real existence of its own and, therefore, cannot be counted as a second entity. For example, a rope which has been mistaken for a snake gives its existence to the snake. The snake has no real existence of its own. Its diameter, bends, length, substance, all belong only to the rope. We cannot say that the snake enjoys an ontological reality apart from the rope. Its nature is only apparent or illusory. The relationship of the Self to the creation is similar, as pointed out in the following verses from Gauḍapāda's Kārikā on the Māṇḍūkyaopaniṣad:

A rope whose nature has not been well ascertained is imagined in the dark to be various things like a snake, a line of water, etc., so also is the Self imagined variously.[2.17]

As illusion (on the rope) ceases and the rope alone remains when the rope is ascertained to be nothing but the rope, so also is the ascertainment about the Self. [2.18]¹⁹⁷

When we analyze the creation we find that we cannot ascribe independent existence to it. The world is finite and changing by nature, its objects coming and going. Using the logic that something which has intrinsic existence, or existence per se, cannot come from or go into nonexistence, the world cannot be said

¹⁹⁷ "Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad and Kārikā" in Čaikara, Eight Upaniṣads, with the Commentary of čaikarācārya, vol. 2, trans. Swami Gambirananda, 246-247.

to own existence. Therefore, the existence which we attribute to it must be borrowed or substrate, but not intrinsic. Gauḍapāda uses this logic in the Māṇḍūkya Kārikā, saying:

That which does not exist in the beginning and the end is equally so in the present (i.e. in the middle). Though they are on the same footing with the unreal, yet they are seen as though real.[2 . 6I]¹⁹⁸

Because of this, the universe is not considered to enjoy an absolute reality, which would be defined as something which exists in all periods of time, past, present, and future. (kālatraye 'pi tiñōhatēti sat). It is rather defined as an apparent reality (mithyā) which falls between the cracks of existence or absolute reality (paramārthikasatyam) and nonexistence (tuccham).

The imagined snake on the rope enjoys such an apparent reality (mithyā). Because we have perceived the snake and responded to it we cannot attribute absolute nonexistence to it. But neither can we say that it really exists. Obviously, the only "real" thing there is the rope. Therefore, we are

forced into accepting the idea of an “apparent reality,” meaning an order of

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., 205.

reality which can neither be defined as existent nor as non-existent (sadasadbhyām-anirvacanēya). Where else to turn? The idea of an “apparent” reality is not derogatory. It simply means that the object in question does not enjoy existence per se (paramārthikasatyam).

The clay pot is another traditional example used to illustrate the difference between absolute and apparent reality. The clay has absolute reality in reference to the pot. The pot comes and goes, the clay remains, independent of the pot. The pot, however, is not independent. Its being rests in the clay. It, itself, comes and goes, enjoying prior (prāgabhāva) and posterior non-existence (pradhvaāsābhāva). It, therefore, enjoys a dependent or apparent reality. In fact, without the clay, there is no pot. Its entire being is one with the clay. And yet, we cannot deny the usefulness of the pot.

These two examples are used to illustrate the relationship between the creation and the Self. The creation does not enjoy a separate or independent reality apart from the Self, and yet, its empirical reality (vyāvahārikasatyam) is not denied. Like the pot’s relation to the clay or the snake’s relation to the rope, the universe has for its being, the Self, which is consciousness. This consciousness, like the rope or the clay is both immanent and transcendent. Immanent because it is the very substance of the universe and transcendent because it is not dependent on the universe for its being. In fact, the presence or absence of the universe is irrelevant to it, as is the presence or absence of the snake or pot irrelevant to the rope or clay. To put it even more starkly, from the standpoint of the clay there is no pot, there is only itself. Similarly, from the standpoint of the rope, there is no snake, and from the standpoint of consciousness, there is no creation. A famous verse from the Māëöükyopaniñad describing this absolutely non-dual nature of the Self, in part, states:

They consider the Fourth [the Self, pure consciousness] to be that which is not conscious of the internal world, nor conscious of the external world, nor conscious of both the worlds...[7]¹⁹⁹

However, the pot, snake, and universe are totally dependent on their substratum, clay, rope, and Self, for their existence and have no reality apart from the substratum. What we mean by advaita, non-duality, is that the clay plus the pot do not equal two. In reality, there is only one clay. The pot, though

¹⁹⁹ Çaikara, “Māëöükyopaniñad,” in Eight Upaniñads, trans. Swami Gambirananda, 205-206.

useful in empirical reality (vyavahāra), has no real independent existence. Similarly, the universe has no reality apart from the Self: the Self plus the universe do not equal two.

In Vedanta, the creative power responsible for the appearance of the creation is called māyā. A traditional etymology given for this word is yā mā iti māyā, meaning, “that which is not is māyā.” In common parlance, māyā means magic. In our empirical experience, illustrations of this apparent creative capacity called māyā are many: that which can cause a snake to appear as a rope, or a fence post as a man, or desert sand as a pool of water, or a mother of pearl shell on the beach as a piece of silver; or that power which creates a dream universe for us in the night. All of these creations seem real while there, but lose their reality completely once their substratum is seen. This universe, a product of māyā, appears real as long as its substratum is not known. Çaikara puts this nicely in Ātmabodha:

The ever changing world (saàsāra) which is full of likes and dislikes, is like the dream. While it is there it appears to be real. Upon waking, it is unreal. [6]

As long as the Infinite Self (brahman), the non dual substratum of everything, is not known, the world appears as though real, just as until the mother of pearl shell is known, the silver piece appears as though real. [7]²⁰⁰

Māyā is the apparent creative capacity existing in the Self which projects the universe, inclusive

of time and space, in a way analogous to our projection of dream in deep sleep. Māyā, like the heat in fire, does not enjoy a reality apart from the Self.

The Nature of God

In Vedānta, God (*ēçvara*) is defined as the Self plus māyā. Māyā must have the Self for its locus: there is no other place to put it, as māyā is responsible for the projection of all duality. Therefore, māyā, existing in the Self, is the Self's creative capacity and the Self plus this creative capacity is what we call *ēçvara*, God. The entire creation can be considered the body of God because it reflects the Self as a single entity. "[The Self], who reflected in māyā, controls it, and is omniscient, is God"²⁰¹

The dream analogy, noting specific differences, is very useful in understanding the nature of God (*ēçvara*), as revealed by the Upaniṣads. God is the one

²⁰⁰ *Çaikara, Ātmabodha Prakaraṇa of çaikarācārya*, ed. Dinesh Chandra Bhattacharya (Calcutta: Sanskrit College, 1961), 3. My translation.

²⁰¹ *Vidyāraṇya, Pañcadaśa* (Bombay: Satyabhamabai Pandurang, 1949) 1:16. My translation.

in whom the entire creation exists and who is aware of that creation, just as dreamer is the one in whom the dream creation exists and who is aware of that creation. The difference between the dreamer and his or her creation and God and His creation is that God is Self-aware and free of ignorance whereas the dreamer has no Self-consciousness of himself or herself as the dreamer and can also get lost in the dream through identification with a dream character. Thus the dreamer is bound by Self-ignorance whereas God is not. This is what is meant by "having māyā under His control," as stated above. Just as the dream characters are part of the dream fabric, the individual (*jéva*) is part of God, as a wave is part of the ocean, or as a cell is part of the body. The individual *jéva*, as part of God's body is taken care of and subject to the laws of God, the total.

The Identity

The Self, from the standpoint of God, is called brahman, meaning that which is infinite. The Self, from the standpoint of the individual is called *ātmā*. The Vedānta pramāṇa is the mahāvākya (great statement of identity) which establishes the identity between the two.²⁰² The revelation of this identity is the purpose (*tātparyam*) of all the Upaniṣads.

²⁰² For an exegesis of the mahāvākya, please see Anantanand Rambachan, *Accomplishing the Accomplished*, 1991, 76-78.

Of all the Upaniṣadic teachings the most significant is the declaration of the identity of the individual self with the Supreme Self. This is the kernel of the Vedas. While disclosing the oneness of the individual consciousness and the universal consciousness that sustains and manifests the manifold, the *çruti* points to the sole reality of non-dual, non-relational Pure Consciousness that brahman is. The whole truth is contained in a terse sentence of three words. There are four such pithy sentences in the four Vedas. Each sentence is called a ' mahāvākya,' lit., the great saying.

The four Vedic mahāvākyas (the great sayings) are:

1. 'Consciousness [manifest in an individual] is Brahman,' as stated in the Aitareyopaniṣad of the Āg Veda.
2. 'I am Brahman,' as stated in the Brhadaranyaka Upaniṣad of the Yajur Veda.
3. 'Thou are That,' as stated in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad of the Sāma Veda.
4. 'This *ātmān* [the individual self] is Brahman,' as stated in the Māṇḍūkyaopaniṣad of the Atharva Veda.²⁰³

²⁰³ Swami Satprakashananda, *Methods of Knowledge According to Advaita Vedānta* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1974), 200.

The realization of the identity between the individual and God is liberation (*mokṣa*). One's Self is recognized as limitless, timeless, and changeless, one with God, and one in whom not only the

creation rests, but who, in fact, is the very substance of the creation. In the vision of Vedanta there is nothing other than the Self. (Remember the clay/pot and rope/snake analogies.) This is what is meant by non-duality. In reality, the Self has always been liberated. The problem of bondage and liberation, therefore, does not belong to the Self, but rather to the individual who takes himself or herself to be limited. The problem is one of Self-ignorance whose solution lies only in Self-knowledge.

From all other means, knowledge, alone, is the only direct and immediate means for liberation. Just as cooking cannot take place without fire, liberation cannot take place without knowledge. [2]

Actions cannot destroy ignorance because they are not opposed to it. Only knowledge can remove ignorance just as light, alone, can remove darkness. [3]²⁰⁴

²⁰⁴ Dinesh Chandra Bhattacharya, Ed., *Ātmabodhaprakaraṇa of aikaarācārya* (Calcutta: Sanskrit College, 1961) v. 2-3. My translation.
The Jēva, Ēcvara, and the Collective Unconscious

In Vedanta, the individual soul, the jēva, is a transmigrating entity who is bound to a beginningless cycle of births and deaths. There is no first birth for the jēva. Its existence is part and parcel of the fabric of creation and the creation cycle is beginningless, having māyā for its cause which is the apparent creative power of the Self (brahman). In Christianity, the being of the creator is different and separate from the being of the creation and its creatures. In Vedanta, the creation is an apparent projection of God, having no separate being from Him. The relationship of God to the creation is similar to the relationship that an individual has with his or her mind. There is both a sense of identity and a subject-object relationship that an individual has with his or her mind. The mind enjoys a sense of Self because it has for its substratum the Self. The mind is known, because the Self illumines the mind. The mind has intelligence, power, creativity. It is an entity unto itself, the form and the intelligence being united together. God has a similar relationship with the creation. He can be likened to a dreamer who is awake to his dream, not lost in identification with a particular individual in the dream, nor lost in identity with the dream, but experiencing the dream, totally, without losing sight of the Self as its substratum. The dream appears in an already created form, replete with individuals and situations. There is no dream creation, per se, as it appears in an already active state. The individuals in the dream are part and parcel of it. The dream environment is not created first and the individuals inserted afterwards. All come together as one whole, forming a conscious fabric composed of knower/known/acting elements as well as an activity fabric composed of actor/acting/acted upon. These triads of consciousness and activity express themselves in a world of names and forms, both subtle and gross. The subtle forms belong to the conscious entities, their sense perceptions, thought forms, moods, and emotions. The physical forms belong to the instruments of perception and action, the physical sense organs and the physical hands and legs, and also to the physical objects which are perceived and acted upon. All names and forms, physical and subtle, and the triads of consciousness and activity which allow for conscious interaction between them, are all projected simultaneously, and are the warp and woof of the dream fabric.

The relationship between the dreamer and the dream is likened to the relationship between God and the creation. The difference is in the fact that the jēva, who is the dreamer, is limited and a product of the creation, whereas God is limitless and is both aware of the creation in its entirety and enjoys the creation as His apparent form. The creation, inclusive of time and space, make up the “dream fabric” of God. All existence, therefore, is within His purview and, in fact, is not separate from Him. The truth of both the dream and the creation is the underlying Self that lends its existence and consciousness to the manifest creation, whether macrocosmic or microcosmic.

For the Vedantin, the dream is the Achilles heel of empirical reality. It illustrates the apparent nature of the creation. The dream is not created; it is projected in its totality. The creation is, like the

dream, a projection of the living psyche in its entirety. Every entity in the creation is a part of the picture, made of the same material as the total. The jéva has a unique relationship with the creation, in that, unlike a rock, it is able to reflect consciousness. In the dream, a panorama of living and inert entities is projected. The living entities in the dream differ from their surroundings in their ability to reflect consciousness. However, all objects in the dream enjoy the same level of reality, whether or not they are Self-reflective. The entire panorama is but a projection of the Self. It is the psyche which comes in and out of manifestation, having for its stable ground of being the Self.

In the beginning all this was but the unmanifested (brahman). From that emerged the manifested. That brahman created Itself by Itself. Therefore It is called the self-creator. [II.vii.1]²⁰⁵
And,

Om. That (supreme Brahman) is infinite, and this (conditioned Brahman) is infinite. The infinite (conditioned brahman) proceeds from the infinite (supreme brahman). (Then through knowledge), taking the infinite of the infinite (conditioned brahman), it remains as the infinite (unconditioned brahman) alone. [Opening prayer]²⁰⁶

And,

²⁰⁵ Çaikara, “Taittiréya Upaniñ ad,” in Eight Upaniñads, with the Commentary of çaikarācārya, vol. 1, trans. Swami Gambirananda, 341.

²⁰⁶ Çaikara, “Ēçā Upaniñad,” in Eight Upaniñads, with the Commentary of çaikarācārya, vol. 1, trans. Swami Gambirananda, 2.

Crave to know that from which all these beings take birth, that by which they live after being born, that towards which they move and into which they merge, that is brahman.[III.i.1]²⁰⁷

The creation, as the dream, is bound by the laws of its own nature which give it an innate structure. There is infinite creativity available within this structure, but still, the structure acts as a limiting container to an infinity of possibilities that exist within it.²⁰⁸ The structure exists both macrocosmically and microcosmically and is the basis for Jung’s concept of the collective unconscious and the archetypes. An examination of the meaning of “structure” will be useful here in understanding what underlies these concepts.

Materially, the structure of the creation, as well as the structure of the imagination, is limited by the nature of the elements that compose it. According to Vedanta,

²⁰⁷ Çaikara, “Taittiréya Upaniñad,” in Eight Upaniñads, with the Commentary of çaikarācārya, vol. 1, trans. Swami Gambirananda, 371.

²⁰⁸ For example, every human being is a unique entity, and there seems to be no limit to the creation of distinctions within the human family. However, the humanness of the human being is contained and limited by its human structure which differentiates it from the nonhuman creatures. Thus, there are limitless possibilities within the structure, but the structure acts as a limiting container which defines the entity in a particular way.

the creation is formed of the five elements: space, air, fire, water, and earth. We cannot imagine a creation apart from these five elements, though we may combine the five elements differently. For instance, we can imagine a universe with a huge sun and a tiny earth, or a universe that is devoid of one of the elements (other than space), but we cannot imagine a universe with a sixth element that is other than some sort of combination of the other five. We have no means of knowledge available for the perception of such an element. To be known, an element must exist within the available patterns of sense perception, falling within the structure of hearer/heard, seer/seen, feeler/ felt, and so on.

Our imaginative faculties are also bound to the five elements, for a sixth material is not available within the structure of the imagination. The imagination can only work with the material that it is given. It does not have the power to create beyond its framework of possibilities. We exist within a structured reality and are part and parcel of that structure. Though our imagination can recreate and

modify the universe infinitely, it can only do so within the structure of existent possibilities.

These existent possibilities, when viewed in terms of the individual *jéva*, form the archetypal structure of the collective unconscious. The *jéva* is that part of the creation which experiences and acts on that experience mentally, emotionally, and physically. The possibilities of experience and action are both created for and limited by the structural framework. Jung stated:

We cannot visualize another world ruled by quite other laws, the reason being that we live in a specific world which has helped to shape our minds and establish our basic psychic conditions. We are strictly limited by our innate structure and therefore bound by our whole being and thinking to this world of ours. Mythic man, to be sure, demands a “going beyond all that,” but scientific man cannot permit this. To the intellect, all my mythologizing is futile speculation. To the emotions, however, it is a healing and valid activity; it gives existence a glamour which we would not like to do without. Nor is there any good reason why we should.²⁰⁹

All perceptions are related to their perceiving instruments. In the physical world, colors are seen,

²⁰⁹ C.G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, 300.

sound is heard, sensation is felt, and so on. An object has no meaning apart from its perception. It would, as though, be relegated to a non-existent status if no one was there to appreciate it. Jung profoundly recognized this fact when he visited the Athi Plains in Nairobi, overlooking a vista that he imagined may never have been viewed before. He related this experience:

From Nairobi we used a small Ford to visit the Athi Plains, a great game preserve. From a low hill in this broad savanna a magnificent prospect opened out to us. To the very brink of the horizon we saw gigantic herds of animals: gazelle, antelope, gnu, zebra, warthog, and so on. Grazing, heads nodding, the herds moved forward like slow rivers. There was scarcely any sound save the melancholy cry of a bird of prey. This was the stillness of the eternal beginning, the world as it had always been, in the state of non-being; for until then no one had been present to know that it was this world. I walked away from my companions until I had put them out of sight, and savored the feeling of being entirely alone. There I was now, the first human being to recognize that this was the world, but who did not know that in this moment he had first really created it.

There the cosmic meaning of consciousness became overwhelmingly clear to me. “What nature leaves imperfect, the art perfects,” say the alchemists. Man, I, in an invisible act of creation put the stamp of perfection on the world by giving it objective existence. This act we usually ascribe to the Creator alone, without considering that in so doing we view life as a machine calculated down to the last detail, which, along with the human psyche, runs on senselessly, obeying foreknown and predetermined rules. In such a cheerless clockwork fantasy there is no drama of man, world, and God; there is not “new day” leading to “new shores,” but only the dreariness of calculated processes.²¹⁰

The perception of the creation is integral to the creation. When we dream, the perceivers, the individuals, come along with the perceived. There is no meaning to objects without subjects to enjoy them. Our action upon the objects, in the form of our perception of them and our relationship with them— what we do to them and they to us—is also structured. For instance, the eyes can only perceive color and form,

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 255-256.

they cannot hear, touch, think, or imagine. Their use is structurally limited. Similarly, all the sense organs are limited by their function and structure, as are all of our other capacities. They can only function within the confines of their structure. If there are thought forms existing outside of the mental fabric, they will never be known to the mind, because the mind is not structured to perceive them. Just

as the eyes can never hear sound because that type of perception is outside of their structure.

Structures exist on all levels of experience. The limitation of sense perception to their respective objects is an example which is simple to grasp. But there are other structures which are often not recognized as such, and these structures determine the nature of human existence and relationship. Jung calls these structures archetypes. They are patterns which bind the individual to his or her humanness and to his or her relationship to God and the creation. They are innate structures, common to humanity in general, and in Vedantic terms, are the beginningless disposition of humankind and its function in the drama of creation. Jung says:

Man “possesses” many things which he has never acquired but has inherited from his ancestors. He is not born as a tabula rasa, he is merely born unconscious. But he brings with him systems that are organized and ready to function in a specifically human way, and these he owes to millions of years of human development. Just as the migratory and nest-building instincts of birds were never learnt or acquired individually, man brings with him at birth the ground-plan of his nature, and not only of his individual nature but of his collective nature. These inherited systems correspond to the human situations that have existed since primeval times: youth and old age, birth and death, sons and daughters, fathers and mothers, mating, and so on. Only the individual consciousness experiences these things for the first time, but not the bodily system and the unconscious. For them they are only the habitual functioning of instincts that were preformed long ago.

I have called this congenital and pre-existent instinctual model, or pattern of behavior, the archetype.²¹¹

²¹¹ C.G. Jung, *Freud and Psychoanalysis*, CW 4, par. 728.

And, about the collective unconscious, Jung says that:

just as the human body shows a common anatomy over and above all racial differences, so, too, the human psyche possesses a common substratum transcending all differences in culture and consciousness. I have called this substratum the collective unconscious. This unconscious psyche, common to all mankind, does not consist merely of contents capable of becoming conscious, but of latent predispositions towards identical reactions. The collective unconscious is simply the psychic expression of the identity of brain structure irrespective of all racial differences. This explains the analogy, sometimes even identity, between the various myth motifs and symbols, and the possibility of human communication in general. The various lines of psychic development start from one common stock whose roots reach back into the most distant past. This also accounts for the psychological parallelisms with animals.

In purely psychological terms this means that mankind has common instincts of ideation and action. All conscious ideation and action have developed on the basis of these unconscious archetypal patterns and always remain dependent on them.²¹²

Such structures are inescapable phenomena that define our essential humanity and are, therefore, played out over and over again in myths, dramas, and rituals, the world over. The characters and settings might change, but the mythical structure remains the same, because the myth or drama is externalizing in symbolic or imaginative form those structures which comprise human existence.

The cycle of birth and death is one such inalterable structure that defines human life. That birth and death should be viewed more in terms of death and rebirth is also an inalterable structure, in that it exists in some form or another in religions and myths from ancient times to the present, and in all cultures. Jung said:

What the myths or stories about a life after death really mean, or what kind of reality lies behind them, we certainly do not know. We cannot tell whether they possess any validity beyond their

indubitable

²¹² C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, par. 11-12.

value as anthropomorphic projections. Rather, we must hold clearly in mind that there is no possible way for us to attain certainty concerning things which pass our understanding.²¹³

Beliefs do not define reality. However, when a belief or mythical motif has a universal nature, it tells us that it is touching something structural in the human being and deserves, therefore, serious inquiry—which of course, it has gotten. Every human being is concerned with the question of his or her own continuity—the death rebirth cycle, and the nature of human existence lies at the heart of theology and philosophy.

Archetypal structures exist beyond conscious knowledge. The death and rebirth motif is one of the core themes underlying a human being's meaningful existence. It is intimately connected to the religious dimension of man, wherein the idea of God as our ultimate parent, encompassing both the mother and the father, holds and protects us in a creation which is larger than but inclusive of worldly existence, so that death is nothing but a passage way into

²¹³ C.G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, 301.

continuing life. The idea of God gives meaning to life that seems without purpose if it is only a physical or chemical phenomena subject to absolute negation.

It is impossible for us to structurally cognize our death in terms of absolute non-existence. We are only able to conceive of it in terms of an infinite variety of passage ways into the beyond, whether that be a heavenly world, hell, sheol, another life on earth, or union with God. We cannot conceive of non-existence, because no matter what form that conception takes, it is always filled by the existence of the questioner. According to Vedanta, one can neither experience nor imagine one's absolute non-existence because there is no psychic material with which to form that imagination nor is there any psychic structure which can simulate it. The closest one can come to such an imagination or simulation, is in the form of objectless existence. Never objectless nonexistence. Therefore, the mind must necessarily account for a continued existence in spite of the perception of physical death. This necessarily must involve some sort of rebirth motif or a liberation motif which will center on some form of union with God, or objectless existence. These are the only possibilities available to the mind. When, however, the rational scientific mind of the modern era shuns the death/ rebirth motif as fanciful and non-scientific, saying that death is death, period, then one must try to fulfill his or her sense of immortality in other ways—through becoming famous, so that he or she will continue on in the memory of the nation through history, or by raising children, so that he or she will be remembered by their family. Though not able to accept one's continued existence beyond the death of the physical body, one still must find some way to be immortal. The archetype will not let him or her rest.

The myths and religions of the world are archetypal images emanating out of this archetypal structure. They symbolize the structure and are meant to fulfill or complete it with a belief that gives it rest. Jung says:

Whenever there exists some external form, be it an ideal or a ritual, by which all the yearnings and hopes of the soul are adequately expressed—as for instance in a living religion—then we may say that the psyche is outside and that there is no psychic problem, just as there is then no unconscious in our sense of the word.²¹⁴

²¹⁴ C.G. Jung, *Civilization in Transition*, CW 10, par. 159.

Otherwise, the archetype will create a disruption in the psyche because it has no way to externalize itself or express itself. Man will be in the conflicted position of having to accept, for instance, death as annihilation, which the archetypal structure will not allow him to accept. This will

make him ill.

But, if the myth or religious symbol generates a religious belief or faith that is not true to reality, eventually, one's inquiry into the nature of things will negate the credibility of the myth. This kills the myth and leaves the archetype without a resting place. If, on the other hand, the myth or symbol resonates with one's experience of reality, and is, in fact, in accord with reality, then, any amount of inquiry will only substantiate one's understanding and the myth or symbol will remain vivified. One's faith, or one's relationship to myth or symbol must hold true to one's experience and logical understanding if it is to live. When this is so, the archetype functions peacefully and that structural component of humankind flows into external symbols and myths for its expression, leaving the psyche undisturbed.

If an archetypal structure cannot find proper expression in the world, a person will become sick. Only in the age of enlightenment did people discover that the gods did not really exist, but were simply projections. Thus the gods were disposed of. But the corresponding psychological function was by no means disposed of; it lapsed into the unconscious, and men were thereupon poisoned by the surplus of libido that had once been laid up in the cult of divine images. The devaluation and repression of so powerful a function as the religious function naturally have serious consequences for the psychology of the individual.²¹⁵

Vedanta provides a metaphysical understanding for the symbols of religious myths and its vision cannot be negated by science. This being so, the archetypal structures on which these myths rest are able to once again flow peacefully in the unconscious. The symbols and images become expressions of truth which give meaning to one's life.

²¹⁵ C.G. Jung, *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*, CW 7, par. 150.

CHAPTER 4

THE WESTERN WAY TO WISDOM

Jung's Fear of Following the Eastern Way to Wisdom

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ung realized that great and profound wisdom was to be found in the East, but strongly felt that we must attain it in our own way. The myth of the East has stood the test of time, much longer than the myth of the West. But, according to Jung, its treasure can only be found within ourselves in our own way. He said:

By an inevitable decree of fate the West is becoming acquainted with the peculiar facts of Eastern spirituality. It is useless either to belittle these facts, or to build false and treacherous bridges over yawning gaps. Instead of learning the spiritual techniques of the East by heart and imitating them in a thoroughly Christian way—*imitatio Christi!*— with a correspondingly forced attitude, it would be far more to the point to find out whether there exists in the unconscious an introverted tendency similar to that which has become the guiding spiritual principle of the east. We should then be in a position to build on our own ground with these methods. If we snatch these things directly from the East, we have merely indulged our Western acquisitiveness, confirming yet again that “everything good is outside,” whence it has to be fetched and pumped into our barren souls. It seems to me that we have really learned something from the East when we understand that the psyche contains riches enough without having to be primed from outside, and when we feel capable of evolving out of ourselves with or without divine grace.²¹⁶

I am not in full agreement with Jung on this point.

Jung, himself, studied many Eastern texts, but not traditionally. Many times Jung referred to the gold mine of knowledge in the East, yet, he made it a point to avoid complete understanding because

he wanted to discover it himself. Because of this, he did not have a correct understanding of many Eastern concepts. Most importantly, he did not understand the nature of pure consciousness and its relation to

²¹⁶ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, par. 773.

the Jungian Self and ego. I agree that Self-knowledge must be discovered directly and immediately within one's own psyche. But is it necessary to protect ourselves from gaining knowledge, just because the West was not the first to come upon it? And is it realistic to think that we can, in this small world, ward off and protect ourselves from the "contamination" of other myths?

Jung spent a great deal of time studying Eastern spirituality and it profoundly affected and influenced his work. However, though he realized the East has tremendous riches to offer, he intuitively felt that if he were to take on the "truths" of the East, it would amount to nothing more than an imitation. He said, "The philosophy of the East, although so vastly different from ours, could be an inestimable treasure for us too; but in order to possess it, we must first earn it."²¹⁷ Jung was convinced that the West would have to come upon Eastern wisdom in a Western way. It was critically important to him that we not attempt to follow the East. He said, "In the course of the centuries the West will produce its own yoga, and it will be on the basis laid down by Christianity."²¹⁸

²¹⁷ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, par. 961. ²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, par. 876.

Jung's fear of the East was partly based on the Eastern disciplines to which he was exposed. Many Eastern spiritual disciplines rely on meditative techniques to experience the underlying reality of the psyche and the world. And these techniques are designed and appropriate for an Eastern psyche, not a Western one. Eastern techniques, Jung felt, were inimical to the Westerner's pursuit of Self-knowledge, because they did not address the Westerner's need to assimilate unconscious material. He once quoted an ancient adept which said: "if the wrong man uses the right means, the right means work in the wrong way."²¹⁹ However, Jung was never opposed to Eastern wisdom itself, the profundity of which he repeatedly praised. In the concluding paragraph of his short essay, "Yoga and the West," he said:

If I remain so critically averse to yoga, it does not mean that I do not regard this spiritual achievement of the East as one of the greatest things the human mind has ever created. I hope my exposition makes it sufficiently clear that my criticism is directed solely against the application of yoga to the peoples of the West.²²⁰

²¹⁹ *Ibid.* par. 4. ²²⁰ *Ibid.*, par. 876

The Western psyche, Jung felt, must first open itself to dialogue with the unconscious, and meditation practices inhibit this dialogue rather than foster it. Meditation, as it is popularly taught, involves conscious control of the mind with the intent to suppress thought flow so that an underlying infinite reality can be experienced. In fact, the Yoga Sutras of Patañjali begin with a definition of yoga as "yogaçcittavāṭṭinirodhaḥ" which means "the control of the thoughts of the mind."²²¹ Jung presumed, and I agree with him, that for the Eastern psyche of antiquity, such suppression did not present a problem, as their unconscious did not contain large portions of their personality which needed to be assimilated into the conscious mind. Jung said:

Yoga technique applies itself exclusively to the conscious mind and will. Such an undertaking promises success only when the unconscious has no potential worth mentioning, that is to say, when it does not contain large portions of the personality. If it does, then all conscious effort remains futile, and what comes out of this cramped

²²¹ P.Y. Deshpande, *Patañjali's Yoga Sūtras* (London: Rider & Co., 1978), 19.

condition of mind is a caricature or even the exact opposite of the intended result.²²²

I would assume that meditation techniques could also be efficacious for a modern person, if he or she enjoyed an equivalent state of psychic health, but our culture has not fostered such a condition. Jung said:

The spiritual development of the West has been along entirely different lines from that of the East and has therefore produced conditions which are the most unfavorable soil one can think of for the application of yoga. Western civilization is scarcely a thousand years old and must first of all free itself from its barbarous one-sidedness.²²³

Jung assumed a direct correlation between yoga practices and the attainment of Eastern wisdom. He tended to lump all Eastern religions into one homogeneous group, treating Chinese yoga, Zen, Taoism, Tibetan Buddhism, Patañjali yoga, and Vedanta as synonyms for Eastern wisdom. However, in reality, these religions differ substantially from one another in content, as well as in their various

²²² C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, par. 871. ²²³ *Ibid.*, par. 876.

spiritual practices. It is true that many Eastern religions do rely on meditation techniques for Self-realization and that there is for most of them, a direct correlation between their spiritual practices and the attainment of wisdom. But, in Vedanta, this is not the case. Vedanta differs significantly from other Eastern spiritual disciplines, in that it makes a definite distinction between the means for attaining Selfknowledge and the means for attaining mental purity or maturity, though each necessarily aids in the development of the other.

Vedanta is a teaching methodology used to directly reveal the Self. It is no more culturally limited than any other means of knowledge. Just as, for instance, sense perception, inference, and presumption all function cross culturally, so too, Vedanta. The teacher does use culturally relevant examples, symbols, and analogies to explicate and highlight aspects of the Vedantic vision. However, the basic structure of the teaching methodology is universally applicable.

The Vedantic means for mental purity and maturation, such as the development of proper attitudes and meditation techniques, do not enjoy the same universality of application as does the teaching methodology. Eastern methods, in fact, can be insufficient and sometimes even detrimental for a mind that does not have a healthy relationship with the unconscious. This is because the Eastern methods, as noted by Jung, do not take into consideration the problem of repressed unconscious contents. The Eastern mind of antiquity had no such problem and “it would be a foolish and senseless undertaking for such people to wish to experience or investigate an unconscious that contains nothing but the silent, undisturbed sway of nature.”²²⁴ Jung clearly discerned this difference between Eastern and Western psyches and provides invaluable guidance to the Westerner who is committed to an Eastern spiritual pursuit.

In Vedanta, nothing precludes the Western student from using Western means to attain wholeness in a Jungian sense and Jung’s insights are a very welcome contribution. His process of individuation can facilitate the maturation process for the Westerner, and help to provide him or her with a mind that can make effective use of Eastern methods for mental purity. But, in Vedanta, neither the relative wholeness achieved

²²⁴ C.G. Jung, *Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, CW 9i, par. 50. The Eastern mind of modernity has been contaminated by the West. Therefore, when I speak of the Eastern mind, I am referring to the Eastern mind of antiquity, prior to the modern era.

through the process of individuation nor mental purity are Self-knowledge. They are, rather, the necessary conditions which qualify a student to make use of the teaching methodology in order to gain Self-knowledge.

In the following sections, we will analyze the mental conditions brought about by Self-ignorance,

the attainment of Self-knowledge, the Vedantic means for becoming a qualified student for gaining Selfknowledge, and the limitations of those means for a Western student. Finally, a Jungian-oriented solution to these limitations will be discussed.

The Problem of Self-Ignorance

The nature of the Self is reflected in the mind when the mind is calm, like still water. The Bhagavadgētā says:

Incomparable happiness reaches this Yogin [meditator], whose mind is tranquil, who is free from impurities [such as ignorance and error], who is free from sin and virtue, and who is not separate from Brahman, [the limitless].[6.27]²²⁵

²²⁵ Bhagavadgētā, 6.27. Translated by Swami Dayananda Saraswati in a personal communication.

An agitated mind, on the other hand, causes the opposite type of experience, because the condition of the mind is such that it does not allow for the experience of the Self. The Bhagavadgētā says:

For the one whose mind is not tranquil, there is no knowledge of the Self. Nor is there contemplation for the one whose mind is not tranquil. And for one who is not contemplative, there is no resolution of the mind. For whom the mind is not resolved, where is there happiness? [2:66]

For, the mind which follows after the roaming sense organs carries away his knowledge, like the wind, a ship in water. [2:67]²²⁶

A person who does not know the nature of the Self to be the happiness or fullness that one seeks in life will pursue sense objects, believing that fullness is something external to be attained or accomplished. This ignorance is responsible for the manifestation of the entire continuum of human emotion from love to hate. The fulfillment of desire creates a momentarily quiet mind which reflects the Self just as a clear silent water reflects the sun. The experienced happiness is

²²⁶ Ibid., 2:66-67.

then superimposed on the desired object as, “This object makes me happy.” Conversely, an unfulfilled desire creates agitation in the mind which does not reflect the Self. This creates a sense of estrangement from one’s Self which manifests in any number of negative emotions such as hate, jealousy, and envy. The absence of the desired object is then blamed for the experience of unhappiness.

The analogy of the three water buckets reflecting the sun illustrates the relationship of the Self to the psyche and the suffering which lack of differentiation between the Self and the ego causes. The condition of the water causes the reflection of the sun to appear differently. If the water has not differentiated itself from the sun, then the sun appears to change with the condition of the water. Similarly, if the individual identifies the Self with the mind, then the Self appears to change with the condition of the mind. In reality, the Self, remaining the same, illumines the changing conditions. But the mind, when it is dull and depressed, taking itself to be the Self, says “I am dull and depressed,” superimposing its condition on to the “I am” which belongs to the Self illumining the mind. When the mind is in a state of ecstasy, like the clear but agitated bucket, the mind says “I am ecstatic”, again superimposing its condition on the Self. When the mind is quiet, clear, and still, then it is reflecting the Self without obstruction and so feels “I am full, happy, complete.” It is in this condition that the mind feels most at home because it is not in a condition which is alien to the nature of the Self. In this condition the mind feels complete and loved, freed from any sense of isolation. This is the state that all people strive to attain—those fleeting moments of joy when a person feels that “This is who I am, this is how I am supposed to be.” Lawrence Jaffe described the quest for this experience beautifully, saying:

...when, after defeat and trouble and many years, I am granted an experience of that timeless, still,

luminescent center (which for Jung was the magnolia tree bathed in eternal sunlight) then I will have found a safe harbor, eternally quiet and restful, to which to retire from the vicissitudes of struggle in this world.²²⁷

The problem is that the source of this experience is unknown, hidden in its non-differentiated association with the psyche. In truth, the Self, as the consciousness which illumines all states of mind, is

²²⁷ Lawrence W. Jaffe, *Liberating the Heart*, 26-27.

constantly present like the sun. It is truly an eternal safe harbor. It pervades the mind as its very content and substratum. Ignorant of its presence, a person becomes dependent on external situations which will seemingly produce that state of happiness. It is a great illusion. The source of what we seek in life is hidden in the nature of the Self.

Because I have not differentiated the Self from the mind, whatever state the mind is in is superimposed on the Self, just as muddy water appears to dull the sun. Mental modifications create the illusion of fleeting fullness. Because I do not know that the Self is the source of happiness, I equate the experience of happiness to the given situation at the time of the experience. This phenomenon is the source of desire. I desire something because I feel that the attainment of that something will make me happy. I pursue the desired object with single pointed pursuit until the desire is fulfilled. During the pursuit, many obstructions can get in my way, all of which become a source of agitation for me. On the other hand, certain events and people can facilitate the fulfillment of my desire and those events and people become objects of my gratitude. And there are many people and events which are absolutely irrelevant to the fulfillment of my desire, and to them I am indifferent. The world divides up into positive, negative, and indifferent teams all in reference to the fulfillment of desire. The negative teams are sources of agitation, the positive teams are sources of love and gratitude, the indifferent teams are non-contributors to my happiness. As I get close to fulfilling my desire, the tension and expectancy increases. I experience states of frustration, agitation, elation, joy, worry, fear, all depending on the prospects for fulfillment. These states are analogous to the mud and agitations in the water bucket which cause the reflection of the sun to be more or less true to the nature of the sun. When the water is muddy, the sun appears dull and so the water will feel isolated from the sun. If the water is dull and agitated the condition will be even worse. If the water is clear but excited, the reflection of the sun will be frenetic but brilliant. All of these conditions of the water are responsible for the “moods of the sun.” Analogously, when the mind is tense because of an obstructed desire, there is an accompanying sense of isolation from the Self which produces sensations which we name as anger, frustration, hatred, dislike, jealousy, envy, and so on. These are all variations of the mind caused by obstructed desire and are usually directed toward the obstruction in the form of “I hate you,” etc. Positive emotions, on the other hand, are experienced toward those who help to remove the obstructions to the fulfillment of a desire. Emotions such as love, gratitude, like, care, concern, compassion, are directed towards objects which are somehow conducive to the fulfillment of my desire. Other objects in the creation are neutral in that they really have no effect on my mental condition as they are not related to the fulfillment of desire. In summary, all inner and outer activities, mood, emotions, thoughts, actions, are products of the mind’s qualitative relation to the unknown Self in its quest to become experientially one with it.

The Attainment of Self-Knowledge

The attainment of Self-knowledge, just as the attainment of any other form of knowledge, must take place in the mind through an appropriate means of knowledge. If I use my eyes to see a rose, the eyes enable a thought form (jñānavātti) true to the rose to arise in the mind. If I use Vedanta as a means

of knowledge, it will enable a thought-form true to the Self to arise in the mind. However, in this instance, the thought-form is true to the conscious subject, the knower, and so the knower/known differentiation is eliminated (akhaēōākāravātti), as consciousness is now illumining a thought-form of itself, which would be analogous to the consciousness being reflected in a mirror.

In order for this type of knowledge to take place, a certain disposition of mind is required, which is not necessary for the operation of other means of knowledge. This is because normally consciousness is lending its light to a thought-form in the mind which is other than itself and that thought-form can be illumined as well as the mental condition. For instance, I can be very angry and still have a thoughtform of the rose. Both the anger and the rose will be illumined by consciousness. Since consciousness, itself, is not being differentiated, I have no problem. However, in order to appreciate consciousness per se, thought-forms which are other than consciousness must be negated so that they will not be confused or superimposed upon the nature of consciousness. This is done by withdrawing the mind from all internal and external objects of knowledge and by turning the mind toward the subject, the conscious being. If the mind which is turned toward the conscious Self, however, does not enjoy a condition which is similar to the Self, then it is that condition which will be illumined and we will still have a subject/object dichotomy. If, however, the mind is similar in nature to the Self, it will be overwhelmed or lost in the Self, similar to a candle flame held up to the sun. The mind, like the flame, becomes as though invisible (atisūkñmavātti), offering no locus for objectification which is other than consciousness itself. It is in this condition that one experiences the nature of the Self not only as consciousness and existence, but as infinite and full; in other words, free from any sense of limitation. Even to use the word “experience” here is misleading, because there is no sensation of a subject/object relationship attached to the experience. Since the Self is self-effulgent, its nature is self-evident and does not need a second knower to illumine it. Just as, for instance, the sun does not need another sun to illumine it.

To further clarify why Self-knowledge requires a particular type of mind not required for objectknowledge, a review of the water bucket analogy may be helpful. Imagine, again, the sun shining on three buckets of water. The sun shines equally on all three, irrespective of the water’s condition, whether muddy, agitated, or clear. This being so, if the condition of the water is to be known, there is no problem. But if the nature of the sun is to be known, the muddy water and the agitated water are not capable of reflecting it as it is. Only the clear water can do that. Similarly, if a condition of the mind is to be known, such as a mood or emotion, or a perception born of one of our means of knowledge, we have no problem. But, if the nature of the consciousness which illumines the mind and is its substratum is to be known, then the actual condition of the mind is important. An agitated mind is incapable of directly appreciating its silent and still substratum. Similarly, a mind which hates cannot appreciate the love which underlies it. Therefore, the mind must enjoy in a relative way the nature of the Self if it is to appreciate its essence.

The Qualified Student

The introductory verses to most Upaniñads and other Vedantic texts expound upon the nature of the qualified student. These qualifications, which I will briefly outline below, must be present to some degree for a person to be attracted to the study of Vedanta. But it is only to the degree that the student possesses the qualifications, that he or she will be able to (1) utilize Vedanta as a means of knowledge, and (2) retain that knowledge once gained. Therefore, these qualifications become values for the seeker, as they are prerequisites for gaining and retaining this knowledge. They are called the secondary means (upaya- sādhana) for gaining this knowledge, while the Vedanta pramāēa is the primary means (upeya-sādhana).

These values are called technically the *sādhana*catuññāya, meaning the four-fold group of qualifications, the attainment of which makes one a qualified student (*adhikāri*) for this knowledge, by bringing about a certain purity of mind (*antaḥkaraṇaśuddhi*) which is necessary for gaining this knowledge. The values are not unique to Vedānta. They will be found in all spiritual disciplines, are often lamented over by poets, discussed by the wise, followed rigorously by the mystics—St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross come to mind immediately, and I have even found them mentioned in various contexts within Jungian psychology. Therefore, as I go through these values one by one, I may quote from some of our Western sources in order that they may be appreciated from a Western vantage point.

First, I will list all of the qualifications as a group and then discuss each one individually.

1. Dispassion (*vairāgya*)
2. Discrimination (*viveka*),
3. The six-fold group beginning with the discipline of the mind (*ṣaṁādiññāṅkasampatti*):
 - i. Discipline of the mind (*ṣama*)
 - ii. Discipline of the body and senses (*dama*)
 - iii. Singlepointedness of pursuit (*uparati*)
 - iv. Endurance of the pairs of opposites (*titikṣā*)
 - v. Steadiness of mind (*saṁādhānam*)
 - vi. Faith in the scriptures and the teacher (*ṣraddhā*)
4. The desire for liberation (*mokṣa*).

Dispassion (*vairāgya*) is the lack of passion toward the attainment of one's happiness through sense pursuits. This dispassion is the result of the second qualification, the ability to discriminate (*viveka*). The rise of dispassion is due to the recognition on the part of the student that the phenomenal world is temporal, and, by nature, incapable of giving lasting happiness. No pursuit, no matter how noble, is free from the bonds of time, in terms of both cause and effect. This means that the result of any action which takes place in time is, itself, time-bound. What is finite cannot produce what is infinite. Then again, an object of happiness is, by definition, separable from the subject and, therefore, not secure. Both the physical body and the experiences of this world are time-bound and so even if they had the capacity to give happiness, one must ultimately be separated from them, which is a cause for grief. Carl Jung expressed this so poignantly in one of his letters, quoted by Aniela Jaffe in her book, *Jung's Last Years*:

The spectacle of eternal nature makes me painfully aware of my weakness and perishability, and I find no joy in imagining an equanimity in *conspectu mortis*. As I once dreamt, my will to live is a glowing daimon, who sometimes makes the consciousness of my mortality hellishly difficult for me. One can, at most, save face like the unjust steward, and then not always, so that my lord wouldn't find even that much to commend. But the daimon reckes nothing of that, for life, at the core, is steel on stone.²²⁸

This recognition of the finitude of experience, in general, and of object-dependent experiences of happiness, in particular, brings about a dispassion or resistance toward relying on them as one's primary source of happiness or fullness. The more discriminative person, often aware of the "swinging pendulum" of life's joys and sorrows, is more apt to be somewhat

²²⁸ Aniela Jaffe, *Jung's Last Years*, trans. R.F.C. Hull and Murray Stein (Dallas: Spring Publications, 1971), 136.

wary of his or her joys and will also try to grow from his or her sorrows. Carl Jung was aware of this.

Jung followed the downward movement of life if it was in keeping with the intrinsic truth of the moment. Yet he could experience joy whenever it came his way as few were able to, and

wholeheartedly joined in the joy of others. Only when one got to know him better, over the years, did one discover that he—a true ‘Till Eulenspiegel!’—was never without the canker of secret care, for he knew the play of life’s pendulum, the inevitable compensation of ‘high’ by ‘low.’ Have you ‘suffered a success?’ he would ask at a suitable moment, half mocking, half amused. He saw where it would end. Suffering accepted can gradually change into strength; joy that remains heedless can change all too quickly and all too often into sorrow and restlessness. Suffering is a challenge, enforcing selftransformation; joy is not, and it does so much more rarely.²²⁹

²²⁹ Ibid., 104.

Edward Edinger, in his book, *Ego and Archetype*, quotes a story that also reminds me of this swinging pendulum.

The exceeding good fortune of Polycrates did not escape the notice of Amasis (his friend the King of Egypt) who was much disturbed thereat. When therefore his successes continued increasing, Amasis wrote him the following letter and sent it to Samos. ‘Amasis to Polycrates speaks thus, It is a pleasure to hear of a friend and ally prospering, but your exceeding prosperity does not cause me joy, for as much as I know that the gods are envious. My wish for myself, and for those whom I love, is, to be now successful and now to meet with a check; thus passing through life amid alternate good and ill, rather than with perpetual good fortune. For never yet did I hear tell of anyone succeeding in all his undertakings, who did not meet with calamity at last, and come to utter ruin. Now therefore, give ear to my words, and meet your good luck in this way. Think which of all your treasures you value most and throw it away, so that it may be sure never to come anymore into the sight of man. Then if your good fortune be not thence forth chequered with ill, save yourself from harm by again doing as I have counseled!’²³⁰

²³⁰ Edward Edinger, *Ego and Archetype*, 32.

To reiterate, dispassion (vairāgya) is the withdrawal from sense pursuits as a means for achieving fullness and the cause for such dispassion is discrimination (viveka). The recognition of the timebound nature of the phenomenal world, of all cause and effect, of the physical body, mind, sense organs, of all achievements, all successes and failures, all family and friends, creates this sense of dispassion or unwillingness to accept the temporal nature of the happiness which these objects produce as a satisfactory solution to the innate inborn need to be a complete and full person. Even though, as Jung states above, we learn and mature through our experiences, it is the maturity that we seek, the sense of being complete, and not really the experiences themselves, especially once we recognize their innate inability to fulfill our basic human need for wholeness or completeness. The focus shifts away from the sense pursuits towards a more introspective search for meanings and solutions.

The third qualification is given as a list of six mental qualities or capacities that the student must enjoy in order to be able to apprehend the nature of the Self. The Eastern means for the attainment of these mental qualifications, as we will show later, can be problematic for the Western mind, if he or she has not adequately assimilated the unconscious.

First, control over the mind (çama) is the ability to view thoughts as objects, to dismiss them or to act upon them at will. The thought loses its capacity to overcome or engulf the mind, taking it for an unwanted ride. The person who has çama has mastery over his or her thoughts.

Second, control over the body and senses(dama) is necessary when çama fails. If one is unable to control the mind and is thus taken over by moods or reactions, dama becomes useful. It is the ability to contain or control one’s actions and behavior—the ability to keep reactions contained at a mental level, rather than inflicting them upon the surrounding environment.

The third quality is the ability to devote oneself to a single pursuit (uparati). In this case, the single pursuit is the attainment of Self-knowledge. If this pursuit is the primary interest and desire of the mind, then one is able to concentrate one's energies upon it. Otherwise, Self-knowledge will be just another one of the desires to be fulfilled in the world, which would mean that the student is lacking in discrimination and dispassion.

The fourth quality is the ability to endure the pairs of opposites (titikñā). When the primary pursuit is Selfknowledge, the pairs of opposites in the world, such as hot and cold days, or pleasurable and painful events which continually confront one, are viewed only as life situations to be experienced, always aiding one on their way to maturity. The nature of the situations themselves are not of primary interest to the seeker, and so can be endured without mental disturbance.

The fifth quality is the ability to fix the mind on a single point (samādhānam). The mind must be capable of steady concentration if it is to use Vedānta as a means of knowledge. Words travel in a linear flow and the student must have the ability to keep the mind focused on the unfoldment of the vision. Then again, the mind must be able to remain calm and quiet if it is to be able to see or absorb itself into the Self, whose nature is absolute calm and quiet. An agitated mind because of its very condition cannot resolve into its opposite. For example, one's reflection in a pond full of ripples would be distorted, and to the degree of the pond's agitation, would the ability to recognize the reflection in the pond be compromised.

The sixth quality is an intuitive acceptance of the Upaniṣadic vision as taught by the teacher pending verification (ṣraddhā). Self-knowledge cannot be gained without exposure to a means of knowledge. But, in order to use such a means of knowledge properly, one must have an attitude which allows listening with an unreserved heart, in such a way, that the mind can be completely present, without a critic's commentary. The critic is useful only after one knows what it is that one is criticizing. But, in order to know, the means of knowledge must operate and the critic becomes an obstruction to this operation. For example, when a student listens to a lecture, if he or she believes (has ṣraddhā) that the teacher knows the subject and that the subject is worth knowing, then the student will listen whole heartedly. Otherwise, the student may be interested in the subject, but, feeling that the teacher is not well-versed in it, will be mentally evaluating the teacher's expertise rather than concentrating on the material. If the student does not value the subject matter, then, his or her mind will be either wandering away from it, or dismissing it as irrelevant.

In order for a means of knowledge to work, one must use it fully. Imagine the difficulty one would have in using one's eyes if the mind was not willing to actually take the eyes for granted while focusing on the object. If the mind insisted on looking at and analyzing the eyes, while they were looking at the object, the knowledge of the object would suffer. For this reason, ṣraddhā is traditionally considered to be the most important quality that a student possess, for without it, the means of knowledge cannot operate. In fact, there is a verse in the Bhagavadgētā substantiating this:

The one who has faith [in the teaching and the teacher] and commitment to the pursuit of knowledge, and who has self-control, he or she gains knowledge. Having gained the knowledge, he or she gains, at once, the abiding peace which is liberation. [4.39]²³¹

The last of the group of four qualifications is the desire for liberation (mumukṣutvam). Once a person has assimilated the fact that the fulfillment of desires cannot produce the fundamental well-being which he or she has been seeking, then a painful sense of insoluble bondage will arise. It is at this point that a secularist will perish in despair or repent; and a religious person will turn away from the world and seek refuge in God. The nature of one's prayer life changes from propitiating God for a new promotion, car, or relationship to a prayer for liberation from the more fundamental bondage of

empirical existence in which he or she is continually torn between the polar opposites.

²³¹ Bhagavadgētā, 4:39. Translated by Swami Dayananda Saraswati in a personal communication.

This realization of absolute helplessness—the recognition that the freedom I seek, the world is not capable of giving me—is the primary qualification for becoming a student of Vedānta. The student must clearly see that what he or she ultimately seeks in life the world cannot give. This realization is what is called bondage and *mumukṣutvam* is the desire to be free from that bondage.

In Christian terms, this state of bondage would be equivalent to the experienced sense of isolation from God, where the soul experiences itself as finite and limited by nature. A person may try to solve this problem within the world but ultimately must realize that the solution lies only in his or her union with God.

Without the four-fold qualifications (*sādhana-catvōḥaya*), the student will not be able to fully appreciate his or her own nature, because the mind, still immature, will continually behave in a way that is opposed to the advaitic vision.

Vedānta enjoins the seeker to understand and practice certain attitudes in order to help the mind gain the four-fold qualifications which will allow the advaitic vision to take root. These attitudes really only reflect Self-knowledge and so the application of them helps to bring one's actions into harmony with one's knowledge, which culminates in the purity of mind which is necessary to abide in the knowledge.

Self-Knowledge in Reference to One's Actions

Self-knowledge in reference to one's actions is called technically, *karma yoga*. There are several stages of *karma yoga* which a student discovers as his or her emotional as well as intellectual depth of understanding increases. Initially, the student recognizes that though he or she may do an action with a certain result in mind, his or her desire cannot dictate the result. If that were possible, then, all actions would produce the desired results which motivated them in the first place. The student, understanding the creation and all of its laws as God, who ultimately is not separate from the Self, performs actions for a desired result, but accepts the actual result as something given by God. This allows the student to have his or her primary relationship with God, rather than with the desired object. The student is in a dialogue with the universe, with God, and at the same time, is able to live life dynamically, without repressing his or her desires. Again, it should be remembered that though such an attitude is useful to any person, here we are looking at this attitude as a *sādhana* for gaining the necessary qualifications for Self-knowledge.

This attitude, which accepts the results of one's actions as the providence of God, helps to neutralize the mental agitations that one experiences when one's desires are thwarted or unfulfilled. Such an attitude creates an inner peace which is conducive for gaining Self-knowledge.

At some point, when the student's *dispassion* (*vairāgya*) has reached a more mature level, his or her desire for Self-knowledge becomes much stronger than sense-oriented desires, and the student will find that his or her actions have become more concerned with fulfilling duties than with seeking pleasures. His or her personal desire is now directed toward gaining Self-knowledge. In this case, the world of duties and responsibilities becomes the field for fulfilling the tasks which God has given. Now, not only is God the one who gives the results of action, He is the one who gives the life that I live. This is yet another and perhaps more total form of relatedness to God, and again, results in an attitude and peace of mind which is consistent with the Vedantic vision.

As the student travels further on his or her road to understanding, he or she realizes that not only is God the giver of the fruits of actions, not only the one who has given me the life that I lead, but also,

is the very one who is living the life. Once this occurs, then one becomes conscious of one's life as an expression of God and one's Self as the Self of God. This is Selfknowledge.

When one realizes that the happiness that one seeks in life is the nature of the Self and not an object different from one's Self, then one no longer demands the world to provide what the world does not have. The one who knows this is free to accept the world as it is, to experience the opposites which are natural to it, without his or her fullness being threatened. The Self, being the substratum of the world, is as free from the world as the rope is from the imagined snake: the world cannot harm it, change it, or remove it. This knowledge frees the mind from bondage, because the Self, which is the treasure for which we have all been searching, can never be lost once found.

Limitations of Vedanta Sādhana for the Western Psyche

The Vedanta sādhanas, or methods and attitudes employed for becoming a qualified student would seem to be complete and very effective for a person who lives within a containing myth and for whom the unconscious functions normally, like a healthy body. However, most modern human beings live in a religiously fragmented and secular world without a containing myth that can adequately hold their unconscious. Such people need to work with the unconscious mind as well as with the conscious mind (the Jungian ego), for their unconscious will be in a tumultuous state, cut off from conscious expression, separated from the conscious mind, as though by a chasm. When such is the case, shadow pressure from the unconscious will undoubtedly inflict pain, moodiness, unwished for responses, etc. on the conscious mind, in spite of every effort a person might make to consciously reform the mind through instilling in it new values and attitudes. The modern person, no matter how adept he or she becomes at imbibing and practicing Vedantic values and attitudes which are conducive to Self-knowledge, will not feel the happiness and freedom which he or she has clearly and experientially realized to be the nature of the Self at the time of teaching, until the conscious mind (Jungian ego) has gained a satisfactory relationship with the unconscious. Until that time, the unconscious will be struggling unhappily underground, trying to gain the attention of the conscious mind in one way or another.

The techniques which Vedanta offers for becoming a qualified student do not deal with the problems of the unconscious, probably because as Jung has stated, the unconscious of the Easterner of old was not problematic. It flowed naturally into the rich symbols of their culture and enjoyed full expression in the world. Our unconscious, on the other hand, does not have adequate outlets and so it expresses itself in the form of moods, neurosis, overpowering emotions, and projections onto others.

In addition to the qualifications and attitudes which we have just discussed, Vedanta also prescribes certain meditation techniques for quieting and absorbing the mind. But, for a person whose unconscious is disturbed, these techniques are not a solution either, and, in fact, may even contribute to the problem. Vedantic meditation techniques focus on non-attachment to thoughts, dismissal of thoughts as they arise, the thorough understanding of the apparent nature of thoughts, the differentiation of thoughts from the Self, and the mirroring of pure consciousness. Though these techniques are useful, no doubt, for dealing with the conscious mind, they are not meant to work with the unconscious mind. In fact, they perform the opposite function of closing off the unconscious by holding the focus of the ego on consciousness alone, dismissing thoughts that may arise from the unconscious and recentering the mind on the pure consciousness of the Self.

Vedanta does, at least, acknowledge the existence of unconscious material. Gauḍapāda, in his Kārikā on the Māṇḍūkyaopaniṣad, for instance, talks of kañāyas, the equivalent of repressed thoughts, that may rise during meditation and disturb or cause a lack of absorption during the meditation. The single relevant verse states:

One should wake up the mind merged in deep sleep; one should bring the dispersed mind into tranquillity again; one should know when the mind is tinged with desire (and is in a state of latency) [sakañāyam]. One should not disturb the mind in equipoise. [3.44]²³²

Çaṅkara comments on the word, sakañāyam, used in this verse, saying:

When the mind of a man, who is practicing again and again, is awakened from deep sleep and is withdrawn from objects, but is not

²³² Çaṅkara, "Māeōūkyā Kārikā" in Eight Upaniṣads, vol. 2, trans. Swami Gambirananda, 319-320.

established in equipoise and continues in an intermediate state, then vijānēyāt, one should know, that mind; to be sakañāyam, tinged with desire, in a state of latency. From that state, too, it should be diligently led to equipoise.²³³

Within the teaching tradition, kañāya is a technical term meaning subtle likes and dislikes that are latent. To translate the word within a psychological framework, we would say that kañāyas are repressed thoughts and affects, or complexes, which create disturbances in the psyche and which will project themselves onto appropriate hooks in the environment.

The Vedantic teacher, when instructing the student in meditation, will advise the student to let the kañāyas rise and release themselves without interference. The mind of the student gains in its depth of natural quietude and enjoyment of the Self as these repressed thoughts are released. It is well known within the tradition that the release of kañāyas is important for gaining a pure mind and meditation is the means for their release. Students do experience the release of deeper and deeper layers of repressed thoughts as their meditative absorption increases. Ideally, this process should continue until all of the problematic

²³³ Ibid., 320.

areas in the unconscious rise into consciousness. This is the extent of the Vedantic means for dealing with unconscious material.²³⁴

Though meditation may work well for a person whose unconscious is functioning normally, it has not proven itself to be sufficient for most modern day people. The modern person is holding too much material in the unconscious for these techniques to be effective. Because of this, many students who have followed Eastern paths to wisdom, in spite of years of sincere effort, remain disappointed, wondering why Self-knowledge has not taken root in them and blessed them with the promised sense of fullness and wholeness.²³⁵

²³⁴ Psychological techniques employing transference, dreams, fantasy, and active imagination are unknown to Vedānta.

²³⁵ I have personally discussed this problem with many Vedānta students and know that it is a wide spread concern within the Vedānta community. The disappointment has also been faced by those who have followed other Eastern paths. The Zen community has been especially vocal. I would refer the reader to the Fall 1991 issue of The Inquiring Mind, a journal of the Vipassana community, which is a special issue devoted to "One Dharma, many paths," and addresses some similar concerns faced by their group. Another example of discontent can be found in an article entitled "Leaving the Ashram" which appeared in the July/August issue of Common Boundary. This article relates the disappointment and disillusionment of several individual seekers who had devoted years of their life to Eastern spiritual paths.

In this day and age, neither the adoption of proper attitudes and values, nor the practice of meditation techniques, nor the continued exposure to the Vedānta pramāṇa has been enough to produce a mind which is capable of reveling in the fullness of the Self, as promised by Vedānta. Gauḍapāda describes such a liberated state in the same Kārikā, saying:

That highest Bliss is located in one's own Self. It is quiescent, coexistent with liberation, beyond description, and birthless. And since It is identical with the unborn knowable (brahman), they call It the Omniscient (brahman).[3.47]²³⁶

Çaikara comments on this verse as follows:

The above-mentioned Bliss, which is the highest Reality; and which consists in the realization of the Truth that is the Self, is svastham, located in one's own Self; çāntam, quiescent, characterized by the absence of all evil, sanirvāḇam, coexistent with cessation, i.e. liberation; and it is akathyam, indescribable, as it relates to an absolutely unique entity; it is uttamaà sukham, the highest happiness. It is ajam, unborn, unlike objective happiness.²³⁷

²³⁶ Ibid., 322. ²³⁷ Ibid.

The attainment of a liberated mind which naturally experiences the love of the Self requires the utilization of techniques which Vedanta does not have. The Vedanta sādhanas do not adequately address the problems of the modern day psyche. Jung, however, has addressed them. He said:

Both methods, Eastern as well as Western, try to reach the goal by a direct path. I do not wish to question the possibilities of success when the meditation exercise is conducted in some kind of ecclesiastical setting. But, outside of some such setting, the thing does not as a rule work, or it may even lead to deplorable results. By throwing light on the unconscious one gets first of all into the chaotic sphere of the personal unconscious, which contains all that one would like to forget, and all that one does not wish to admit to oneself or to anybody else, and which one prefers to believe is not true anyhow. One therefore expects to come off best if one looks as little as possible into this dark corner. Naturally anyone who proceeds in that way will never get round this corner and will never obtain even a trace of what yoga promises. Only the man who goes through this darkness can hope to make any further progress. I am therefore in principle against the uncritical appropriation of yoga practices by Europeans, because I know only too well that they hope to avoid their own dark corners. Such a beginning is entirely meaningless and worthless.²³⁸

The Westerner has to take his or her route to mental purity through the unconscious, not around it or in spite of it. Only the assimilation and integration of unconscious materials into consciousness will provide the mental health and maturity that is needed for the Vedantic techniques dealing with the conscious mind to become meaningful. Otherwise, these techniques simply create a proper conscious attitude which covers and hides painful repressed thoughts and complexes.

Facing the Shadow

Jungian psychology concerns itself primarily with bringing unconscious material into consciousness. The analytic process is structured to create a protective

²³⁸ C.G. Jung, Psychology and Religion: West and East, CW 11, par. 939.

container wherein the ego can meet and integrate the highly sensitive contents of the unconscious and eventually come into a receptive dialogue with the unconscious as a natural matter of course. This is, initially, a painful process for the ego, for it is the shadow material of the unconscious that first presents itself. Jung defines the shadow as “the ‘negative’ side of the personality, the sum of all those unpleasant qualities we like to hide, together with the insufficiently developed functions and contents of the personal unconscious.”²³⁹ To bring such contents into consciousness is thus not an easy or pleasant task. However, it is our secrets that bind us, throw us into conflicts, and sap energy from the conscious mind. Jung says:

To cherish secrets and to restrain emotions are psychic misdemeanors for which nature finally visits us with sickness—that is, when we do these things in private. But when they are done in communion with others they satisfy nature and may even count as useful virtues. It is only restraint practiced in and for oneself that is unwholesome. It is as if man had an inalienable right to behold all that is

²³⁹ C.G. Jung, *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*, CW 7, 66, fn. 5.

dark, imperfect, stupid, and guilty in his fellow beings—for such, of course, are the things that we keep private to protect ourselves. It seems to be a sin in the eyes of nature to hide our insufficiency—just as much as to live entirely on our inferior side.²⁴⁰

Those things which we cannot face, our embarrassments, shames, humiliations, deprivations of love, weaknesses, and inadequacies account for a myriad of emotional sufferings. Symptoms of such unintegrated shadow elements are common today, suffered in varying degrees by most of us. Depression, lack of self-esteem and self-worth, feeling unloved, lack of confidence, and states of anxiety are just a few examples. Facing the shadow material which lies at the root of these symptoms is a painful process because it requires the ego to assimilate experiences which it was loathe to face previously. June Singer states that,

Early in analysis it may be expected that there will be a considerable struggle in which the ego tries to maintain its position against rapidly emerging unconscious contents which

²⁴⁰ C.G. Jung, *The Practice of Psychotherapy*, CW 16, par. 132.

seem so destructive as they tear away at the person's image of himself.²⁴¹

The task is often terrifying and humiliating, creating raw vulnerability as one relives hurts of the past or confronts one's dark side in the presence of another person.

But terrifying as it may be, at some point in one's life, usually during mid-life, the shadow knocks so loudly at the door, that one is often compelled to confront it. This confrontation has been especially problematic for many Western spiritual seekers who, struggling to fit into a religious ideology, have repressed their darkness while striving to be only "good." The more restrictive the ideology, the larger will be a person's shadow. Frieda Fordam addresses this point in her definition of the shadow, saying that:

the shadow is the personal unconscious; it is all those uncivilized desires and emotions that are incompatible with social standards and our ideal personality, all that we are ashamed of, all that we do not want to know about ourselves. It follows that the narrower and

²⁴¹ June Singer, *Boundaries of the Soul: The Practice of Jungian Psychotherapy* (New York: Anchor Books, 1972), 220.

more restrictive the society in which we live the larger will be our shadow.²⁴²

Many seekers have tried religiously to conquer and eliminate the shadow, thinking that if they dismiss, deny, reject, and/or ignore all of their unacceptable thoughts for long enough, the thoughts will eventually admit defeat and go away, realizing themselves to be unwanted and unwelcome intruders. The underpinnings for the denial of the shadow is the Christian belief that the dark side of the psyche is an evil ultimately to be eliminated. Jack Sanford said:

Historically, Christianity has failed to see that its task is to win back, not to reject, these lost parts of ourselves devilish though they may seem to be. We try to exorcise, via repression, projection upon others, and various forms of denial and magic, what should not be exorcised but made conscious and integrated. Only then will the split-off parts of ourselves, the lost deities, cease to have their disturbing effects.²⁴³

²⁴² Frieda Fordham, *An Introduction to Jung's Psychology* (Great Britain: Penguin Books, 1987), 50.

²⁴³ Jack A. Sanford, *Evil, The Shadow Side of Reality* (New York: Crossroad, 1981), 119.

According to the Jungian view, even the Self, or God-image, has both its light and dark aspects. This differs from the traditional Christian belief that the darkness in the psyche is due to original sin and was not in God's plan for humanity. Thus, for the Christian, the burden of darkness falls on the shoulders of a guilty humanity who had disobeyed God. This being the case, the only permissible

thoughts, meaning those thoughts which are blessed by God, are the ones which fall on the positive side of the continuum. Thoughts from the other side are of the devil and should not rise in the mind of a “pure” person. Such a belief has created an especially heavy burden for spiritual seekers who seek to please God, and who want relationship and union with Him. Students of Vedanta who have grown up within a Christian culture bring with them to their Eastern path this split in the Godimage, a split which does not exist in the God-image of the East as well as in most ancient cultures.

In the more ancient cultures, such as that of the Hindus, Greeks, the Jews of the Old Testament, and the early Christians, the God-image contained within it the full spectrum of opposites. These ancient Gods were capable of both love and hate, compassion and jealousy, protection and destruction. They were not “all goodness and light.” This being so, humans were permitted to experience without guilt a much broader spectrum of emotion. Though they may have been expected to confine their behavior to the limits of the law, they certainly were allowed to feel hate, rage, jealously, bitterness, and anger as natural human emotions evoked under certain conditions. Sanford says:

Only among the Greeks was there no war among the gods (quarrels, maybe, but not wars), for these gods and goddesses were too wise to claim to be good. So psychology suggests that we reject any pretence of being good that forces us to keep our evil hidden from ourselves. We thus follow the example of Jesus who, when he was addressed by the rich young man as ‘Good Master’ retorted, ‘Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone.’²⁴⁴

According to Jung, if one believes that the shadow is not part of God’s creation and should not, in fact, exist, and, therefore, must be eliminated in order to please Him, then he or she is in great trouble, because the shadow is integral to the psyche and cannot be eliminated. Jung says that:

²⁴⁴ Ibid., 24.

...evil, without man’s ever having chosen it, is lodged in human nature itself...it bestrides the psychological stage as the equal and opposite partner of good. This realization leads straight to a psychological dualism, already unconsciously prefigured in the political world schism and in the even more unconscious dissociation in modern man himself. The dualism does not come from this realization; rather, we are in a split condition to begin with. It would be an insufferable thought that we had to take personal responsibility for so much guiltiness.²⁴⁵

In Jung’s view, our psychic health and wholeness depend upon the integration into consciousness of repressed material and to spurn such integration will lead to stagnation. If the ego cannot face its shadow material, it will be unable to enter into dialogue and relationship with deeper levels of the unconscious. Jolande Jacobi says:

The shadow stands, as it were, on the threshold of the realm of the ‘Mother’, the unconscious. It is the counterpart of our conscious ego, growing and crystallizing in

²⁴⁵ C.G. Jung, *Civilization in Transition*, CW 10. par. 573.

pace with it. This dark mass of experience that is seldom or never admitted to our conscious lives bars the way to the creative depths of our unconscious. That is why persons who strive convulsively, with a frightening effort of the will that is far beyond their strength, to remain ‘on the peak’, who can admit their weaknesses neither to themselves nor to others, often succumb, sometimes suddenly, sometimes gradually, to a deep-seated sterility. The spiritual and moral tower they live in is not a natural growth but an artificial scaffolding erected and sustained by force, hence in danger of collapsing under the slightest weight. Such persons find it difficult or impossible to face up to the inner truth, to enter into a genuine relationship, to do any really vital work; and as more and more repressions accumulate in their shadow, they become increasingly entangled in neurosis. In youth, the

shadow stratum is relatively thin and easy to bear; but as life goes on and more and more material collects, it becomes a serious and often unsupportable burden.²⁴⁶

²⁴⁶ Jolanda Jacobi, *The Psychology of C.G. Jung* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1942), 112.

The psyche, just as all life, comprises the opposites. All of our thoughts, emotions, and fantasies can be placed on a continuum between them. We cannot have love without hate, good without bad, happiness without sadness, and so on. The opposites form the outer poles of a continuum which includes them and everything in between. The psyche, which is inclusive of both poles, seems to require the ego's acknowledgement of the negative elements as well as of the positive elements. By acknowledgement I do not mean the acting out of the negative elements, but rather an honest recognition of their presence which we can then contain within the confines of our moral code. For example, the admission of a desire to steal is much different than the act of stealing. To admit the desire is to recognize a shadow element in ourselves. The restriction of the act is an exercise of our moral code. The ego has the freedom to accept or reject shadow demands, if it is conscious of them. However, shadow material, because it is so threatening to the conscious values of the ego, often remains repressed to lead a life of its own in the unconscious, dissociated from the ego. It then surreptitiously and insidiously finds expression in the environment through our projections if we cannot carry the burden of our shadow consciously, then others will have to carry it for us through our unconscious projections.

The attempt to deny, ignore, and/or eliminate the negative side of life, those things which have been deemed unholy, evil, ugly, inferior, or bad, causes great frustration not only for ourselves, but for others. Jung was always sympathetic with those who had to live with "saints," as he defined them—those "venerable personages" who had succeeded in totally repressing their shadow, leaving the burden of it for others to carry. He said:

I once made the acquaintance of a very venerable personage—in fact, one might easily call him a saint. I stalked round him for three whole days, but never a mortal failing did I find in him. My feeling of inferiority grew ominous, and I was beginning to think seriously of how I might better myself. Then, on the fourth day, his wife came to consult me...Well, nothing of the sort has ever happened to me since. But this I did learn: that any man who becomes one with his persona can cheerfully let all disturbances manifest themselves through his wife without her noticing it, though she pays for her self-sacrifice with a bad neurosis.²⁴⁷

And,

Think of the fate of a woman married to a recognized saint! What sins must not the children commit in order to feel their lives their own under the overwhelming influence of such a father! Life, being an energetic process, needs the opposites, for without opposition there is, as we know, no energy. Good and evil are simply the moral aspects of this natural polarity.²⁴⁸

And,

...it is highly moral people, unaware of their other side, who develop particular hellish moods which make them insupportable to their relatives. The odor of sanctity may be far reaching, but to live with a saint might well cause an inferiority complex or even an outburst of immorality in individuals less morally gifted. Morality seems to be a gift like

²⁴⁷ C.G. Jung, *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*, CW 7, par. 306. ²⁴⁸ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, par. 291.

intelligence. You cannot pump it into a system to which it is not indigenous.²⁴⁹

Jung also mentioned the stress that denial of the shadow and "trying to be too good" put on his parents. Jung said of his father that:

He did a great deal of good—far too much— and as a result was usually irritable. Both parents made great efforts to live devout lives, with the result that there were angry scenes between them only too frequently. These difficulties, understandably enough, later shattered my father's faith.²⁵⁰

When the dark side of the emotional spectrum is given its due place in the human condition, it no longer need be vaulted in the unconscious as repressed shadow material. This allows for a healthy psyche. Denied, the rejected shadow rattles at the doors of consciousness striving for admittance, seeping out in the form of neuroses and projections. Sanford notes that:

...everything in the unconscious that has been repressed strives for reunion with

²⁴⁹ Ibid., par. 130.

²⁵⁰ C.G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, 92.

consciousness. It is as though we put certain things in the basement of our house and shut the door tightly. But these things do not want to remain in the basement. They turn into devils and rattle the door and seek to find some way out of their imprisoned state and back into the world of consciousness. In so doing they create anxiety, since we tend to fear the return of the repressed. But this attempt of repressed contents to reach consciousness is not simply an attempt to disturb consciousness or gain revenge. The movement is toward the light of consciousness because this is necessary if psychological redemption is to occur. No matter how malignant these split-off contents of the psyche may appear to be, and no matter how malicious their tricks, there is always the possibility of their redemption if they can reach consciousness. Paradoxically, the redemption of these lost parts of ourselves also results in our redemption. That is, we can be whole only when we have helped redeem our devils.²⁵¹

²⁵¹ John Sanford, *Evil: The Shadow Side of Reality*, 125.

The assimilation of the shadow into consciousness, though never complete, opens the door between the conscious and unconscious mind and releases the psyche to function normally. Human goodness or virtue does not lie in the non-existence of evil in the psyche, but rather in the ability to contain the negatives without acting them out. Sanford said:

What do we do with our Shadow? How much expression in our lives do we allow our dark side? To deny the life of the Shadow entirely, as we have pointed out, is to run the risk of having our life energies dry up. There are times when we must allow some of the unlived life within us to live if we are to get new energies for living. Moreover, if we strive to be only good and perfect, we become hateful, for too much of the vital energy within us is being denied. For this reason, there are few people more dangerous in life than those who set out to do good. It can even be said that: whenever we try to exceed our capacity for natural goodness we bring about evil, not more good, because our unnatural stance generates an accumulation of darkness in the unconscious. Nevertheless, becoming a whole person does not mean giving license to the Shadow. We do not integrate our personalities if we change from being a person who is too righteous to a person who lives every impulse out without any moral or social restrictions.²⁵²

As mentioned earlier, the repression of the dark side was not a problem for ancient India as well as for many other ancient cultures. The gods of antiquity embodied both the dark and light sides of creation and thus the continuum of opposites within the psyche was accepted as natural to the human condition. Therefore, the task of these ancient cultures was not to assimilate the dark side of the personality into consciousness, but rather, to handle the dark side in consciousness, according to the collective values of their time. Our task is different, at least initially. We must, first, integrate the dark side of ourselves and the dark side of God into consciousness. Once conscious of this repressed

material, we will be able to use the Eastern sādhanas involving attitudes, values and meditation to bring about the purity of mind necessary to own the vision of Vedanta. But, first, we need to reclaim both our personal and collective shadow. This is Jung's

²⁵² Ibid., 65.

position and Vedanta would not disagree with him. Vedanta clearly states that only a whole person is qualified to gain its vision. A person for whom much of the personality is repressed will constantly be but a victim to those repressed aspects of himself or herself and will not be able to realize the full nature of the Self which Vedanta reveals.

The Nature of Good and Evil

A discussion of the shadow leads to questions concerning the origins and reality of good and evil. The nature of good and evil has been an ongoing philosophical and theological discussion from ancient times. As might be expected, Jung has addressed the problem in great depth, especially in his work, *Aion*.²⁵³ Vedanta has also had much to say about it. This is because the ontological understanding of good and evil in relation to God and to the human being will greatly affect the ego's relationship to God, the creation, and other humans. It will also affect their relation to themselves. Jung and Vedanta differ in their conception of good and evil. The differences are the logical outcome of their respective definitions of the Self, as we will see.

²⁵³ Please see C.G. Jung, *Aion*, CW 9ii, par. 74-120, for Jung's views on the nature of good and evil and the *privatio boni*.

Though both Jung and Vedanta accept that the propensity for both good and evil exist innately in the psyche, Jung gives a more substantial reality to good and evil than does Vedanta. Jung asserts that both good and evil are tangible forces in the creation and are of equal reality, at least from a psychological standpoint. For instance, when discussing the Christian theory of *privatio boni*, he says:

The Christian answer is that evil is a *privatio boni*. This classic formula robs evil of absolute existence and makes it a shadow that has only a relative existence dependent on light. Good, on the other hand, is credited with a positive substantiality. But, as psychological experience shows, "good" and "evil" are opposite poles of a moral judgment which, as such, originates in man. A judgment can be made about a thing only if its opposite is equally real and possible. The opposite of a seeming evil can only be a seeming good, and an evil that lacks substance can only be contrasted with a good that is equally nonsubstantial. Although the opposite of "existence" is "non-existence," the opposite of an existing good can never be a non-existing evil, for the latter is a contradiction in terms and opposes to an existing good something incommensurable with it; the opposite of a non-existing (negative) evil can only be a non-existing (negative) good. If, therefore, evil is said to be a mere privation of good, the opposition of good and evil is denied outright. How can one speak of "darkness," or of "above" if there is not "below"? There is no getting round the fact that if you allow substantiality to good, you must also allow it to evil. If evil has no substance, good must remain shadowy, for there is no substantial opponent for it to defend itself against, but only a shadow, a mere privation of good. Such a view can hardly be squared with observed reality.²⁵⁴

²⁵⁴ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, par. 247. Many philosophers would not agree with Jung's position on the *privatio boni*. However, it is important to remember that Jung is not speaking metaphysically, nor is his argument a philosophical one. He speaks of good and evil as equally experiential realities within the psyche and within our empirical existence. He lays no claims on the metaphysical reality of either one. But, at the same time, Jung appears to have no respect for metaphysical concepts which cannot be squared with observed reality. For a response to Jung's position on the *privatio boni* from a Christian theological perspective, please see Fr. Antonio Moreno, *OP.*, *Jung, Gods, and Modern Man*, London: Sheldon Press, 1968, 145-160.

And, later, he says:

Whatever the metaphysical position of the devil may be, in psychological reality evil is an effective, not to say menacing, limitation of goodness, so that it is no exaggeration to assume that in

this world good and evil more or less balance each other, like day and night, and that this is the reason why the victory of the good is always a special act of grace.²⁵⁵

Vedanta will also accept this position as far as it goes. However, it takes the analysis of good and evil further, revealing the underlying cause of their respective manifestations. If the ultimate ground of creation and the psyche is dual, then Jung's argument for the equally substantial reality of good and evil seems obvious and logical. However, if the ultimate ground of being is non-dual, being free from the opposites, as is the Vedantic Self, then good and evil need no longer be viewed as forces in and of themselves. Rather, they can be viewed as reactions, in the form of emotions, fantasies, and actions, which are generated by the mind's qualitative relation to the Self. When such is the case, neither good nor evil has

²⁵⁵ Ibid., par. 253.

any intrinsic or lasting reality. In other words, there are no good and evil forces. Rather, the psyche responds, according to its values or lack thereof, to the actual or anticipated experience of pleasure and pain. These reactions form the continuum of mental modifications (*antaùkaraëavåttis*) responsible for the experience of moods, emotions, affects, both positive and negative, as well as the activity related to the existence of such emotions.

According to Vedanta, the spectrum of positive and negative emotions are determined by the degree to which the mind reflects or obscures the Self, analogous to the way in which clear water reflects the sun and muddy water obscures it. Positive emotions, such as love, compassion, sympathy, and joy are experienced when the mind is clear, at rest, and without obstructed desire. Negative emotions are experienced when the mind is agitated and in a state of "wanting." Benign actions naturally spring from positive emotions and "evil" actions arise from negative emotions. Two often quoted verses from the Bhagavadgētā describe the cause for the rise of dark emotions and their untoward effects. Çaikara introduces these verses saying that they point out "the source of all evil." Attachment to objects is born when a person contemplates upon them. From attachment arises desire. From desire anger is born. [2:62]

From anger comes delusion, from delusion loss of memory. From loss of memory, reason is destroyed. From the destruction of reason, the person is destroyed. [2:63]²⁵⁶

The mind's qualitative relation to the Self generates the whole spectrum of feelings from the most sublime joy to the deepest sorrow. These feelings, in turn, generate the entire spectrum of our relational experiences from love to hate. Relational feelings, in turn, generate the whole spectrum of behavior from good to evil.

Our behavior is kept in check to a greater or lesser degree by our values and our will. All activity, whether inner or outer, strives for the experience of the Self, which can only be captured in fleeting experiences, its whereabouts being hidden from the seeker. The Self, unless one has been exposed to a teaching methodology which reveals it, will not have been differentiated from the psyche. It remains hidden as the very Self of the seeker, the conscious substratum

²⁵⁶ Bhagavadgētā, 2:62-63. My translation.

of the entire psyche. The result of this nondifferentiation will be the existential problem faced so poignantly by Jung, which is to be crucified by the opposites and bound to them at one's deepest level. According to Jung, the very core of our being is composed of opposites and consists of both good and evil forces. Being an antinomy, it can only offer momentary experiences of equanimity; it can never be a changeless refuge. Father Moreno, in a critique of Jung's ideas on religion and individuation, said, "Jung's capital mistake is to ascribe duality to the Godhead; then, accordingly,

the human self as a faithful image of God requires duality, too.”²⁵⁷

For Jung, the small and finite ego is the bearer of consciousness and the Self becomes conscious through its manifestation in the ego. As discussed earlier, Jung felt that it is the task of the modern era to contain the opposites of the Self, allowing them both into consciousness, with the special goal of purifying the dark side of God. Lawrence Jaffe put this nicely, saying, “Humankind is destined to be the vessel in which the darkness of God will be purified.”²⁵⁸

²⁵⁷ Fr. Antonio Moreno, OP., *Gods, Jung, and Modern Man*, 1968, 144, ²⁵⁸ Lawrence W. Jaffe, *Liberating the Heart*, 20.

Though Jung did not recognize the Vedantic Self as the substrate consciousness of the whole psyche, he did make several allusions to the experience of a higher consciousness which seemed to witness the storms of the mind without itself being affected by them. His formulation implies the Vedantic Self, but having not differentiated it, he was unable to integrate it conceptually into his experience. He said:

What, on a lower level, had led to the wildest conflicts and to panicky outbursts of emotion, from the higher level of personality now looked like a storm in the valley seen from the mountain top. This does not mean that the storm is robbed of its reality, but instead of being in it one is above it. But since, in a psychic sense, we are both valley and mountain, it might seem a vain illusion to deem oneself beyond what is human. One certainly does feel the affect and is shaken and tormented by it, yet at the same time one is aware of a higher consciousness looking on which prevents one from becoming identical with the affect, a consciousness which regards the affect as an object, and can say, “I know that I suffer.” What our text says of indolence, “Indolence of which a man is conscious, and indolence of which he is unconscious, are a thousand miles apart,” holds true in the highest degree of affect.²⁵⁹

Jung did not differentiate the consciousness which seems to be looking on from the structure of the psyche. Vedanta, on the other hand, does make that differentiation. In the vision of Vedanta, the Self is untouched by the psyche, just as the rope is untouched by the snake. The Self is not bound by the opposites, and, in fact, the opposites are objects of awareness, the awareness itself being changeless and non-dual. Its essential nature, the ground of all being, is love. Good and evil have no intrinsic reality but ebb and wane in relation to the mind’s qualitative closeness to the Self.

²⁵⁹ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, CW 11, par. 17

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

V

Vedanta has much to offer the West as it goes inward in search of a meaningful God-image. During this age of the Holy Spirit, which Edinger refers to as the Psychological dispensation, a more introverted approach to God has slowly been developing. And according to Jung, the Assumption of Mary has changed the Trinitarian God-image into a quaternity. Both phenomena, the Psychological dispensation and the Assumption, have brought us nearer to the Eastern God-image. This being so, the teachings of the Upaniñads, as maintained in Advaita Vedanta, become now relevant and timely for Western seekers.

When an Upaniñad is properly utilized as a means of knowledge, it has the capacity to give an experiential knowledge of the Self and its substrate identity with God, individual, and creation. The knowledge, once gained, is irrefutably sound, for no other means of knowledge can negate it, it can withstand logical inquiry, and it does not conflict with one’s experience. Its vision does not negate the discoveries of science, nor can the discoveries of science negate it. Because Vedanta deals with

realities, that is, the absolute reality of the Self (paramārthikasatyam) and the apparent nature (mithyātva) of empirical reality (vyāvahārikasatyam) and one's subjective reality (pratibhāsikasatyam), and not with the objects themselves, its scope of inquiry differs from that of science.

One's Self, the ultimate subject, both exists and is conscious, but cannot be objectified as an object, because it is the content of the one who objectifies. This being so, the natural means of knowledge available for scientific inquiry are not applicable to knowledge of the Self. Even Jung's inquiry into the contents of the psyche will not give knowledge of the Vedantic Self, for, just as the Self is the consciousness of the one who objectifies physical objects of knowledge, it is also the consciousness of the one who objectifies the subtle objects of knowledge within the psyche.

Because the Self is Self-effulgent as the core or center of one's being, it is not entirely unknown. Every person knows himself or herself as a conscious existent being, but the nature of consciousness is beyond our means of knowledge. The Upaniṣads are a means of knowledge for differentiating the Self from all that has been superimposed upon it. Unless a means of knowledge is utilized, whether it actually functions as it promises cannot be known. Once, however, the means of knowledge is used, then the vision which it gives can be subjected to rigorous analysis. The teaching methodology of Vedānta comprises both a means of knowledge as well as an analysis of the knowledge once gained.

The vision that Vedānta has to give humanity is liberating. Its essential message is that one's very being is limitless fullness and is the Self of God and the substrate reality of the creation. With this vision, the ego is freed from its sense of isolation, as it can never be away from God, nor does it see itself as an isolated being within the creation. The individual, like a wave in the ocean, is, in essence, not separate from God in any way, neither as a creature in relation to the creation, nor essentially, as the conscious substrate being.

But the Western psyche must assimilate this knowledge according to its own needs and directives. The Eastern methods for gaining the maturity necessary to own this knowledge are not adequate for the Westerner. Jung's ideas open the way for the West to understand the East in a form which is palatable and possible. It will not help us to understand the East only intellectually nor to imitate it. The secrets contained in the religions of the world have to be found within our own soul.

Religious symbols can no longer be worshipped as external realities. Science has negated this possibility. But science, while negating the external validity of our symbols did nothing to establish their internal validity, thus leaving us devoid of a containing myth which would give us meaning and purpose. Jung has given us a way to regain our sense of meaning and purpose by rediscovering the reality of the psyche within a scientific framework. He has made sense of our religious symbols, interpreting the divine drama of the West, our Christian myth, in terms of the psyche's actual experience. He has given us a way to relate to God through our experience of the God-image and he has shown how the God-image has changed through time.

If we accept Jung's interpretation of the Western "divine drama," then we can see how the Western Godimage, as it is transforming itself in this new age, is beginning to move toward the Eastern God-image, which movement is bringing with it a desire for the wisdom of the East. It is as though a new religion is being formed from the depths of our psyches which will bridge the East and the West. Max Zeller, one of Jung's students and analysands, had a dream about building a new religion to which many people are contributing. He related his dream to Jung and Jung commented on it.

A temple of vast dimensions was in the process of being built. As far as I could see— ahead, behind, right and left—there were incredible numbers of people building on gigantic pillars. I, too,

was building on a pillar. The whole building process was in its very beginnings, but the foundation was already there, the rest of the building was starting to go up, and I and many others were working on it.

Jung said, “Ja, you know, that is the temple we all build on. We don’t know the people because, believe me, they build in India and China and in Russia and all over the world. That is the new religion. You know how long it will take until it is built?”

I said, “How should I know? Do you know?” He said, “I know.” I asked how long it would take. He said, “About six hundred years.”

“Where do you know this from?” I asked. He said, “From dreams. From other people’s dreams, and from my own. This new religion will come together as far as we can see.”²⁶⁰

As this study has attempted to show, the knowledge of Vedanta completes our God-image and reveals and fulfills the final destiny of the human being. Knowledge of the Vedantic Self is the true conjunctio which Jung refers to as the union of opposites. But this knowledge is not easily won by the West.

The Western psyche is not a product of the East. In the West we have split the opposites, holding the good in consciousness and repressing the bad. According to Jung, this split is rooted in the incarnation of God as Christ. God incarnated His good side, leaving His bad side repressed. And we have followed the way of our God. We also repress our dark side and project it out on to others so that we will not have to claim it as part of ourselves. It is now our task to own our dark side. This assimilation of unconscious material is our sādhana and must be added to the Eastern sādhanas if we are to gain the emotional maturity necessary to personally own the vision of Vedanta. This is Jung’s invaluable contribution to the Western student of Vedanta.

²⁶⁰ Max Zeller, “The Task of the Analyst,” *Psychological Perspectives*, 6 (Spring 1975), 75.

As we have seen, Vedanta also has an invaluable gift to offer Jung, or more appropriately, those of us who are continuing to build on the temple of our transforming Western God-image. Vedanta offers knowledge of the relationship of consciousness to the ego, the psyche, the world, and God. Though Jung experienced the Vedantic Self in many ways and often referred to it, he did not know it and, therefore, it is absent from his myth. Without a proper teaching methodology, it is impossible to discriminate the unalloyed Self in the psyche. Rather, it remains superimposed on the images which one is experiencing. Jung never saw the seer, per se, and knew, very well, the epistemological futility of such an attempt. One can never see oneself as an object, because to do so would be to lose the subject.

Without a means of knowledge, the knowing “I,” though experienced, cannot be known as it is, in and of itself. Vedanta asserts itself to be a means of knowledge for exactly this: it is a mirror for the knowing “I,” the ultimate subject who cannot be objectified, but because of being self-effulgent by nature, can be differentiated from those objects on which it has been superimposed. The Vedantic Self was missed by Jung, because, without a means of knowledge, he could not make this differentiation.

So many times when Jung was sitting by his lake at Bollingen, he felt himself to be in the water and in the sky and in the plants. He experienced his being as all pervasive, true to the vision of Vedanta. Many of us have had similar experiences. They are experiences of one’s own Self, the all pervasive substratum of the creation. This Self is the lost treasure, the wholeness we all seek. We experience it when our mind is quiet and thus able to reflect the fullness of our own being.

Jung attributed the fullness of the Vedantic Self to the union of opposites within the psyche. He was unable to differentiate this Self from the psyche. For Jung, the opposites are at the basis of reality and nothing transcends their duality. Vedanta adds the non-dual Self to Jung’s vision. Consciousness,

then, becomes the unifying factor which is the Self of both the Jungian Self and Jungian ego. The same consciousness reflects in the ego and reflects in God. It is not created, it neither increases nor decreases, it is non-dual and infinite. It is the fullness and wholeness which we strive to experience.

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